FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX

NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTIST

IMAGINEFX CELEBRATING 7 YEARS OF FANTASY AND SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX **100TH** Issue

BEST EVER WORKSHOPS

JASON CHAN
How to streamline your digital art workflow

GENZOMAN
Manga colouring in Photoshop

RAYMOND SWANLAND
Unmissable creature painting techniques

MARTA DAHLIG
Give your fantasy figures a fresh look

DAN LUVISI
Design an original sci-fi character

SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION

100 FAVOURITE ARTISTS

The ImagineFX Vote

100 Favourite Artists

The 100 most-loved fantasy artists as voted for by the readers of ImagineFX

Featuring
Sparth
Bobby Chiu
Michael Kutsche
Frank Frazetta
Gurney
HR Giger
Brian Froud
Alex Ross
Adam Hughes
Boris Vallejo & Julie Bell

We celebrate with inspiration and advice from the world's finest artists

Future

Welcome...
to a massive celebration!

Hello everyone! Remember me? Could I have picked a better issue to return from my maternity leave? I can't tell you how excited I am to be back in the hot seat just in time to celebrate our 100th issue.

I started at ImagineFX on issue three, so I've had quite a few memories to revisit this month. It was also around issue three that we realised we were on to something big in terms of discovering a wonderful community of talented artists we could put a spotlight on.

This edition is not only packed full of our thoughts on what we've achieved over these past seven years, but is also jam-packed with our favourite artists dishing out indispensable advice on creating art. There's also a countdown of your favourite ImagineFX covers, and the top 100 list of your greatest artists of all time – all voted for by you. Take a look at the list to see where your personal favourite is placed, and perhaps to also discover an artist or two who you've not checked out before, so you can see their approach and maybe feel inspired to try out a new style for yourself.

I'd also like to thank you for picking up this edition – and any edition for that matter. If you've stuck with us for all 100 issues, I salute you! We wouldn't be anything without you, dear reader. It's your community, and we always love to hear your views, and help share your art. I hope we're inspiring you to get creating as much as we did on the first day you set eyes on us.

Right, I need to grab a slice of cake before the team eat it all…

Claire

Claire Howlett, Editor
claire@imaginefx.com
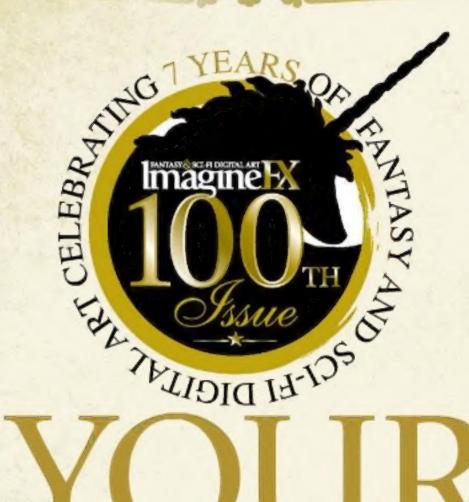
Our special cover for subscribers this issue.

CELEBRATING 7 YEARS OF FANTASY AND SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX
100TH Issue

YOUR FAVOURITE COVERS

Seven and a bit years from launch, hundreds of artists, thousands of sketches and WIPs, all to bring you 100 amazing covers. So, which one did you vote your favourite?

See the full 100 list on **www.imaginefx.com**

20 Issue 83
Derek Stenning
A change of direction for issue 83 as we turned to the striking spherical designs of Derek's personal space project. Number 20 on our list proves big helmets are popular!

19 Issue 5
Skan Srisuwan
One of Asia's pioneering digital artists, Skan brought a rhythm to the chaos in his cover art. A novel metallic printing technique was used to bring the image to life.

18 Issue 67
Adam Hughes
Adam turned in another playful cover that draws on his love of Gil Elvgren with his day job as Catwoman's premier artist. We never did find out where the 'FX' went...

TEAM PICK
IAN DEAN
Associate Editor

Issue 97
"Working on issue 97's X-Men cover with Adi Granov was a highlight for me, not least because we got to dip into Marvel's history and kit our characters in their Jack Kirby original costumes. The cover was topped off by a reworked logo and swirly, psychedelic print treatment."

TEAM PICK
BEREN NEALE
Digital Editor

Issue 67
"There's so much to love about this cover. First, the mighty Adam Hughes agreed to create a new image of his signature, leather-suited beauty. Then we started playing around with Miss C Woman stealing our 'FX' (a cover first!). Her character breathes life into the cover – exactly what a cover image is meant to do!"

YOUR SAY
From colours to creatures, you reveal why some of our lovely covers continue to appeal...

"Issue 86 with Will Murai's pulp style pin-up. I'm a sucker for cheesecake."
Audie Eagleheart

"Definitely Bobby Chiu. Actually, just a few days ago I pulled out issue 72 with his cover and tutorial and read it one more time."
Alena Kubikova

"This is gonna sound really cheesy but issue number 1, because there's way too many good covers to pick from, and this is where they all started."
Deanna Roberds

"Colour & Light by Helen Rusovich gets my vote. I just love, love, love this cover!"
Jessica Halliday

17 Issue 89
Remko Troost
Celebrating the art of Assassin's Creed, Remko sent us four sketches of eagles, sunny woodland and tree-scaling assassins. We loved this one. Did you spot the eagle?

14 Issue 15
Hoang Nguyen
We turned back the clock for an antique-style cover treatment. Hoang's eye-catching portrait used subtle details and warm tones to ensure this was a striking cover.

Issue 55
"Raymond's modern take on Medusa is breathtaking. Large textured snakes, dramatic lighting and raw emotion leap from the cover. The use of metallic ink on the Gorgon is a lovely touch, as is the Clash of the Titans typography. Melanie Delon's beautiful dark wizard complements the infamous figure from Greek mythology."

Issue 83
"This image exudes confidence. Not just in the astronaut's expression, but the fact that Derek felt eye contact with the viewer – usually key for a cover – wasn't necessary. Then, instead of a sales-friendly space bikini, she's all but obscured by a large helmet and unflattering suit. Finally, the strong purple typography works with, rather than against the delicate lilac shades of this stellar cover."

11 Issue 31
Adi Granov
A celebration of all things Marvel and spandex, Adi's first cover for us focused on his successful run as Iron Man's artistic guide. A striking, bold cover takes flight!

8 Issue 27
Kyoung Hwan Kim
Our first toe-dip into the wonderful world of manga art led with this striking profile illustration from Kyoung Hwan Kim, who was an FXPosé artist in the previous issue.

16 Issue 93
Admira Wijaya
Rather than an aggressive image we opted to make our mech a fire-fighting vehicle, and Admira jumped at the chance to layer his image with fiery detail.

13 Issue 54
Adam Hughes
Adam's first cover for ImagineFX is layered with all the details you'd expect from comic's premier cover artist, including a cheeky cover of the latest issue of Slayboy!

10 Issue 86
Will Murai
Pulp art was a high-wire act. Sexual but not sexy, cheesy but not offensive, retro but modern... Did the talented Will Murai pull it off? You voted it number 10, so yes!

7 Issue 1
Kyoung-min Cho
"When we saw Kyoung-Min's art we knew it was right for issue one," says launch art editor Steve Gotobed. "We loved how the faerie beckoned the viewer to 'come in' to the piece."

15 Issue 95
DCWJ
Derrik Chew's cover bursts with colour and imagination, so it's hard to believe this one was toned down. The original art featured more tentacles, chains and underwear.

12 Issue 82
Alex Garner
More comic fun with the pin-up influence of Alex Garner, whose Wonder Woman echoes the Golden Age as much as it does the trappings of a modern heroine.
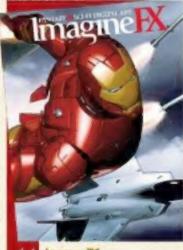
9 Issue 69
Raphael Lacoste
Our first resized issue from the 'square' format to the big and tall page size was ushered in by Raphael Lacoste's majestic painting that puts the emphasis firmly on epic.

6 Issue 4
Jason Chan
"My plan was to create an image that was ghostly, yet beautiful and delicate," said Jason. The girl's dress was painted using a bed sheet as reference, worn by Jason!

Issue 74
Greg & Tim Hildebrandt

An entire issue themed around Star Wars? How amazing is that! Not least as Greg Hildebrandt agreed to share his original 1977 poster art with us for the cover, and inside revealed how this iconic painting was done in just 24 hours, with his wife as a model.

Issue 18
Andrew Jones
Loïc Zimmermann
Mélanie Delon
Jason Chan

A stellar team of artists was drafted in for a unique four-cover pitch. Reimagine four classic paintings: Klimt's The Kiss, Munch's The Scream, Bouguereau's The Rapture of the Psyche and The Birth of Venus by Botticelli. A tall order and a unique concept that highlighted the creativity and talent of digital art's leading lights.

Issue 42
Dave Gibbons

Comic art legend Dave Gibbons agreed to share some of his digital art wizardry with us for the cover of issue 42. Inspired by his iconic Watchmen work, Dave created a new take on Rorschach. We think the patterning looks like two squiggly feet. Which means we need a holiday. Or more exercise.

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX

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GO! MANGA!!

Get inspired by Asia's new **art superstars!** Follow stunning step-by-step painting secrets inside...

PLUS! TOP ARTISTS REVEAL HOW THEY'RE STAYING AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION

---

5 Issue 43 Stanley Lau

Manga art and comic art have always played a large part in ImagineFX's success. With this in mind we approached rising manga-style star Stanley Lau to create a striking hot-pink image just for our cover. Based on his then-new Pepper character, Stanley's cover always impresses every time we see it. Now a leading light in the Far East's illustration art scene, Stanley works for some of the world's biggest comic brands, but back in issue 43 this amazing artist was just breaking through, and even worked from his sick bed to deliver our vibrant cover. That's dedication to the cause!

1 Stanley works quickly and efficiently and is one of the best draftsmen we've been lucky to work with. His initial sketch worked perfectly on the cover and so we set him painting...

2 Stanley painted his Pepper character in her standard red outfit, but on reflection we needed something with more punch for our manga-style cover art.

3 We asked Stanley to ramp up the colour, and his response was to use a hot pink palette. Pepper popped off the page and we knew a hit cover was in the making.

4 Issue 75
Hyojin Ahn

A member of NCsoft's global art team, Hyojin's artwork exudes confidence and expression. His depiction of Evil Sylvari from the video game Guild Wars 2 sets the tone for the Game Art issue perfectly. Hyojin's cover art draws the eye and is an incredibly lively composition. Mixing western and manga influences, the artwork feels fresh and evocative – Hyojin's lightness of touch is balanced by defined line art and floral touches. It's a perfect top five cover.

3 Issue 50
Android Jones

Digital art pioneer Andrew 'Android' Jones painted our celebratory 50th issue cover. He adapted many of the page graphics from ImagineFX into Painter custom brushes. Mixing Russian Orthodox and Sumerian influences, Android Jones delivered one of our most memorable cover illustrations.

Of the two sketches Android Jones sent in, we opted for the engaging face-on portrait to deliver a powerful cover.

2 Issue 40
Raymond Swanland

"Wow, thanks to everyone! It means a lot to me that a piece I'm so proud of holds such a special place with the readers," says the Oddworld concept artist. His twisting, sprawling, serpent-like dragon was inspired by Chinese folklore. The strong silhouette creates an engaging design, ideal for a cover.

Raymond Swanland's stylised dragon painting was voted your second favourite back in issue 50's vote, and is second again. That's some achievement – you sure love this cover!
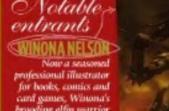
BEHIND THE COVERS

The ImagineFX readers even got a crack at the cover art!

Issue 61
Christina Davies

ImagineFX readers have also been heavily involved in our wonderful little magazine, so why not give one lucky reader the chance to paint the cover? After searching through thousands of entrants we chose Christina's art for its artistic merits and newsstand impact.

Winner

Notable entrants

WINONA NELSON
Now a seasoned professional illustrator for books, comics and card games, Winona's brooding elfin warrior came so close!

MILES JOHNSTON
Just 16 when he entered, Miles's haunting warrior painting impressed.

JULIE DILLON
Cover lines might have struggled with Julie's image, but we still liked this entry from the Chesley Award winner.

Issue 48
Daniel Dociu

Our first fantasy landscape cover, Daniel Dociu's art grows as you open the gatefold cover to discover a cosy alien settling over a calm seashore. What more encouragement do you need to start painting digitally?

Issue 71
Genzoman

"It was a very pleasant surprise," says Genzoman as we tell him he's scooped the top place as voted for by you. "I'm very grateful to all those who voted for me and who have allowed my art come into their lives. Thank you!"

The Chilean manga artist first came to our attention in issue 15, when the artist was selected in the FXPosé section for that month. Although his colours were muted and his style a manga take on Frazetta, Genzoman (real name Gonzalo Ordoñez Arias) was already on his way to a successful illustration career.

After receiving the pitch idea for a cover from editor Claire, Genzoman sent over four different sketches. We all loved the cat-girl giggling on the building ledge, with a night scene to anchor our logo. But will it look too dark for a manga cover?

After receiving the cover pitch idea for a cover from Claire, Genzoman sent over four sketches representing different takes on the idea.

> **I'm very grateful to all those who voted for me and who have allowed my art come into their lives**

Art editor Paul Tysall roughly coloured our preferred sketch as a guide, from which Genzoman began working up into the final cover. Given the artist's love of vibrant colours there was little doubt this image was going to pop once the clashing blues, yellows, oranges and highlights were introduced. The final cover image is a wash of contrasting colours that take a night setting and illuminate it. The cute cat girl, surrounded by her kitties, is playful and fun – the colours draw you into the scene instantly. The result? A beautiful, bright manga cover that you voted for in your thousands! Well done Genzoman!

Paul coloured our chosen sketch as a guide, from which Genzoman worked up into the final cover. Given the artist's love of vibrant colours, we knew this image was going to jump off the page once the clashing blues, yellows, oranges and highlights were introduced.

The final cover image is a wash of clashing colours that brighten up a night scene with neon glows. The cute cat girl, surrounded by her kitties, is a cheerful, appealing character – she typifies the sensibilities of manga as an art form. It's a beautiful image.

See the full 100 list on www.imaginefx.com

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART
ImagineFX
Contents

Celebrating 100 Issues!

"We toyed with Digital Artist, Digital Art, Digital Painter, but none of them felt right"
Launch editor Rob Carney on naming ImagineFX

Reader FXPosé
THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART

See page 12 for the best new art ➤

Colour and light

Your favourite covers

Forum winner

Top 100 artists

Legends sketchbook

Making a PACT

Black and white

ImagineFX
Workshops

Advice and techniques
from pro artists...

Artist Q&A

Artist Q&A

68

How to watch your video workshops

Where you see this badge you'll find an accompanying video workshop. Click the link to watch the artist at work

78
Design a futuristic character

84
Bring life to a classic figure

Reader FXPosé

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR FANTASY ART

Diosdado Mondero

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monderostudios2@me.com
Oils, mixed media, Photoshop

Diosdado has been working as a professional artist ever since leaving high school. He's now the president of his own creative firm, Mondero Studios.

Working as an art director at an interior design firm for over 10 years gave Diosdado the skills to get his own company off the ground. "I had the opportunity to master techniques in all media and styles, from pencil to airbrush, large-scale murals and even architectural concepts."

Diosdado is proud to be largely self-taught and feels he owes much to the fantasy legends of the past. "I try to keep the traditional ways of the old masters, such as Frank Frazetta, alive. In my eyes, he was the greatest fantasy artist who ever lived and has inspired a new generation of talent."

1 THE FAERIE FOREST PRINCESS
"I took a photo of my friend Frances leaning in a large chair and used it as the basis for the dragon's head. The rest came naturally. The scene tells the story of a knight searching for a mysterious faerie princess, who became so enchanted with her beauty that he was never seen again."

2 THE BATTLE OF DRAGONIA "I love using my friends for inspiration. My friend and muse Angie was the model for my Dragon Queen, because she has four dragon tattoos and collects dragon statues. Originally, I was going to paint her riding a dragon, but she asked if I could also add a muscle-bound Viking."

ARTIST OF THE MONTH

Congratulations Diosdado - you've won yourself a copy of Exposé 10 and d'artiste: Character Design! To find out more about these two great books, go to www.ballisticpublishing.com.

Giselle Almeida

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MAIL gisalmeida.art@gmail.com
MEDIA Photoshop

When Giselle was in her late teens, she realised illustration could become a way of bringing her imagination to life. She first experimented with photo manipulation, before moving on to digital painting.

"Photo manipulation was extremely useful for getting into illustration," she says, "especially in terms of composition and image depth. The internet was a great tool for expanding my horizons, and I bought my first tablet after suggestions from online friends. I'm inspired by artists including William Bouguereau, Jana Schirmer, Dice Tsutsumi and Ayami Kojima."

Soon afterwards, Giselle created artwork for advertising and video game companies before founding Studio Chaplin. "I now create artwork for animation companies and such-like."

About the artist

Concept artist Raymond Swanland wants to get his hands on Giselle's art…

"Giselle's work captures that excellent balance between a painterly style that reveals the artist's hand, and a three-dimensional quality that makes me want to reach out and grab hold of it."

1 ASTERIX & OBELIX "This was a collaboration with my friend Caio Monteiro – he put down the line art and I crafted the whole painting. It was nice to experiment with a new atmosphere, along with working on male characters instead of female."

2 CYANGABI "This was the first piece where I decided to paint everything on one layer. I still remember how uncertain I was, but it was the first step I took in finding a new approach to creating and viewing art."

3 SILVERCAST CASINO "I took plenty of photographs of myself posing – I had lots of fun inventing them all! After taking the photos, I had to try and make each character look different to each other."

Sarah Webb
LOCATION US
WEB www.reluin.deviantart.com
EMAIL bonfireofstars@gmail.com
MEDIA Photoshop

Whether based on imaginary places or real cities of wonder, there's a beautiful, ethereal quality to Sarah's artwork. "My work is mostly inspired by fantasy stories and photos of the places that I haven't been able to visit yet," she says. "I love being able to show places that don't exist, and painting the places I've never seen in real life is the second-best thing to being there."

Based in Alaska, Sarah started painting digitally around three years ago after her parents bought her a tablet for her 15th birthday. "With digital painting, I love having the flexibility to perfect a piece without worrying about ruining it with one mistake." She's looking forward to working towards a BFA in illustration, along with finding new ways to inspire her art.

Artist insist

Fantasy artist Justin Gerard shows his enthusiasm for Gibigianna, by Sarah…

"I love the sense of peaceful weightlessness that Sarah manages to capture in this scene."

1 KITES "This was inspired by a family trip to Hawaii. I started the painting as a nature scene practice, but the huge trees were more interesting to paint than I expected, so I ended up continuing this until it was done. I thought the picture needed more colour, so I included the fish kites at the top of the picture."

2 ACQUA ALTA "The title means flood tide. This piece was based on a little story I wrote a few years ago about a city on the shore of a very shallow sea. At high tide, the water floods the streets of the city. I enjoyed painting a night-time scene with only a few light sources, along with getting the right kind of architectural feel."

3 GIBIGIANNA "This is a play on light reflected from water to a mirror. Venice is one of my favourite cities, but it took me years to finally draw it. I had fun figuring out the interesting perspective for this picture, which was made easier by using digital perspective grids."

Wilhelm Behr
Germany
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traumfusion@gmx.de
Photoshop

A true creative through and through, Wilhelm describes his style as a "fusion of dreams, fantasy and reality". After living in Africa until the age of 10, the diversity of global culture had a lasting impression on Wilhelm well into his professional career. "I've been working as a freelance artist since finishing my studies, and have worked for many well-known companies," he says.

Although Wilhelm enjoys his current role at Brand Fashion creating art prints, he would love to get his big break to be able to support his family. "I like to keep my tastes diverse and be open to all kinds of creative practices."

Artist edit

Illustrator Mélanie Delon picks out Giselle's Electric Maintenance for praise…

"This is a very dynamic science-fiction piece. I love the cold blue colours mixed with the pale pink in the background. The mech's design is also very cool, and the lighting is simply perfect. Great job!"

1 DRAGON PRINCESS TZAVELENA
"The only pieces of reference I used for this piece were my girlfriend's arms and hands. I created a few custom brushes and enhanced my canvas texture. This was the first time that I tried to recreate the feeling of daybreak in a painting."

2 ALIEN SPECIES "Back in 2012, there were many crazy things said about the end of the world, which inspired me to explore the idea of an alien species. Everything was improvised and created from scratch, with one thing building onto the next."

3 ELECTRIC MAINTENANCE "I was keen to challenge myself and produce a sci-fi scene, and it's been one of my most popular pieces. I combined photos of New York and Hamburg as a reference source and used custom Photoshop brushes to finalise the piece."

✛ Oliver Cuthbertson

England
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olicutho@hotmail.com
Photoshop

With having already worked for prestigious clients including HBO, Oxford University Press and Bloomsbury, things are looking pretty bright for Oliver. History and fantasy both play important roles in his work, often intermixing in one way or another. The artist feels lucky to have had the chance to illustrate many of his favourite stories professionally, such as Conan the Barbarian and King Lear.

"I was originally trained as a traditional animator, which taught me a lot about anatomy, movement and drawing lots of pictures really, really fast," says Oliver.

Artist crit

Dinotopia creator James Gurney enjoys the storytelling in Oliver's art…
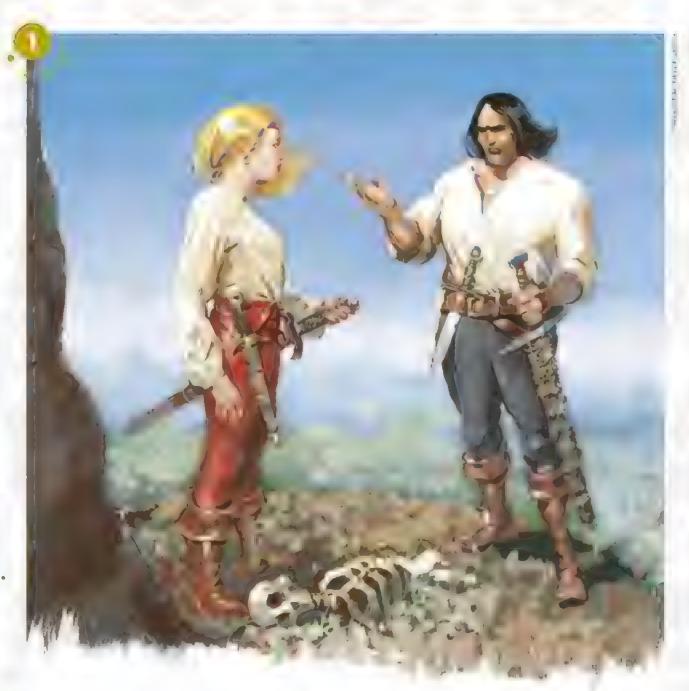
"King Lear is enthroned with all his pride and power, before his tragic downfall. His glory, like the candles, is about to run out."

1 CONAN MEETS VALERIA "Part of a number of illustrations I did for Oxford University Press, which recently published Conan: Red Nails. It wanted Robert E Howard's stories toned down for kids: less violence, gore and nudity. Quite a tall order since these things are cornerstones of Howard's stories!"

2 ALL THE KING'S MEN "After a trip to the Wallace Collection in London I couldn't resist turning some of my sketches of armour and weapons into a full painting. Museums and galleries are always the best places to fire the imagination, and London happens to be chock-full of them."

3 KING LEAR "I was commissioned by Greg Jackson at Pearson to paint a few scenes from Shakespeare's King Lear. For the cover, they wanted Lear on his throne looking as grim as possible. The original play is brilliantly adapted by Timothy Knapman."

Matthew Scott Forsyth

New Zealand
www.beyondthebox.biz
jobu.extra.co.nz
Photoshop, Maya

Who'd have thought that a bit of friendly rivalry could lead to a career as a professional artist? "I started out drawing when I was 10," says Matthew, "because I was the best artist in my group of friends. We used to have competitions on who could draw the best Dungeons & Dragons characters."

As time progressed, Matthew did all he could to improve his skills, with the turning point eventually coming with the completion of a 3D animation course. "I was picked up by a games company as its lead artist, which was great. I stayed there for a few years before becoming a freelance artist, powering my laptop with solar panels and working with programmers around the world on various 3D projects."

Along with 3D work, Matthew also illustrates covers for ebooks and would love the opportunity to work for Wizards of the Coast.

Artist crit

Tolkien artist John Howe shares his love of Matthew's dramatic fantasy art…

"I think 'light' would be the best word to qualify Matthew's work. He has a light touch and demonstrates a lovely use of light. It's a world away from grim, dark fantasy – it's more of a dream world."

1 ONE SHOT "This is a piece I've painted over about four times over the past six years. I find this quite a good way of measuring any improvement, because you can treat the original as the blocking out."

2 BALROG AND GANDALF "I found it quite difficult to separate Gandalf from the rest of the scene in this piece. In hindsight, I could have perhaps rendered him in a cooler colour value."

3 DEALING WITH DRAGONS "I wanted to do a dragon-themed piece and I quite like how this one turned out. This dragon feels old – probably down to his lack of teeth – and a little bit sly."

4 WARMTH "I often find the hardest thing to light properly is skin, so I did this as a lighting exercise. I decided to also throw in a few metal elements for extra definition."

SEND US YOUR ARTWORK!

Want to see your digital art grace these very pages? Send your work to us, along with an explanation of your techniques, the title of each piece of art, a photo of yourself and your contact details. Images should be sent as 300dpi JPEG files, on CD or DVD. All artwork is submitted on the basis of a non-exclusive worldwide licence to publish, both in print and electronically.

You can also email submissions for FXPosé. Bear in mind that files must be no more than 5MB in total, or we won't receive them. fxpose@imaginefx.com

SEND YOUR ARTWORK TO:
FXPosé
ImagineFX
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, BA1 2BW
UK

Jim Pavelec painted this cover for Eerie. He wants to encourage the creative industry to compensate artists for their time, effort and financial livelihood...

Fighting fire with fire

Taking action With the successful funding of PACT, we decided to find out what they are trying to achieve for artists – and why

In the aftermath of a panel discussion at IlluXCon, Jim Pavelec, Aaron Miller, Todd Lockwood, Randy Gallegos and Mike Sass have created PACT, the Professional Artist/Client Toolkit. It's a new website designed specifically to encourage transparent working relationships between artists and clients. This is in direct response to some of the shadier aspects of making a viable living as a professional artist.

"The first thing on the PACT list is to get a cheap membership programme solidified and help build a firewall against eroding standards," says Randy Gallegos. "The most important thing we need to do is stop the degradation, and that will take a group effort before we can begin to advance things." The website is going to serve as an information centre to make sure that artists and clients are all on the same page, explanations of contracts, company ratings based on artists expectations, and much more.

We often hear stories that suggest even the most prolific global entertainment companies don't address the need to increase artist wages in line with modern

Mike Sass reckons PACT is going to educate artists on how to retain their rights and strike fair deals

> **I've seen invoices for illustrations from the 1900s that are the same as today**

Mike recommends that artists should remember to be realistic about taking on jobs that match their needs

living costs, with many pay rates staying at the same figure for well beyond a decade.

"I'm new to the industry, but my broad experience leads me to believe that there have been few changes to accommodate modern living expenses," says Aaron Miller. "I've seen invoices for illustrations from the early 1900s that are more or less the same as today. NC Wyeth was paid about $60 for one of his early covers – you can see plenty of ads for the same fees today over 100 years later."

"There are many companies out there that pride themselves on the high standard of artwork created for their signature products, yet simultaneously fail to offer a satisfactory payment in return for the realistic work involved.

"In some ways, the use of digital technology has lulled clients into a false sense of time and ease, as Mike Sass explains. "If anything, rates have decreased while expectations of quality, and flexibility have increased. This is especially difficult for traditional artists

JIM PAVELEC
After discussions at IlluXCon, words have become action

Have you seen the industry change in accordance with modern living costs?
No. Most companies are paying the same, or even less than they did a decade ago. I've recently been contacted by several companies offering half what they used to pay

So you think wages don't always reflect the amount of work that's realistically involved?
Definitely. And it's not just the work. As well as your time, think about how much your equipment costs, not to mention education and internet bills. These things add up, and should be considered when deciding on what you think is fair pay for the work you do.

What kinds of problems can freelance artists face when dealing with unfamiliar clients?
In today's climate you're usually approached with a work-for-hire contract, which means the client gets the rights to do anything they want with the image you create, in any and all media, for eternity. In many cases they don't need all those rights, but it's usually their lawyer's preference. Also, they're not even coming close to fairly compensating the artists for the purchase of all of those rights.

What measures can artists take?
Say no to jobs that are low paying and of little benefit. You can easily get stuck in a rut of accepting tons of low-paying work, and crank out mediocre art to meet deadlines. But with a portfolio of mediocre work you can't get any of the higher paying gigs. Allow yourself time in between jobs to create your best pieces. In the long run those will get you the better jobs, meaning you can leave the bad jobs behind.

Jim has been working as a freelance artist for over 15 years, including on Magic: The Gathering and D&D.
www.jimpavelec.com

Todd Lockwood hopes PACT will help aspiring artists get to know their rights before being caught out in the future.

who now have to match the fidelity of computer-generated art on deadlines and demands driven by a digital workflow.

Another consequence of lower wages is the complicated limbo of contract many clients require. While it's easy to assume it's simply a case of clients calling the shots, the reality at the other end of the spectrum is that budgets are shrinking fast. As Todd Lockwood points out: "Not all clients are evil schemers, the real world has simply become tougher. But artists seem to be last in line to get paid when the money runs out."

Part of the problem is the standardisation of the workflow. Lockwood is concerned that although established artists feel the burn of creating art for someone else's sake, it's the younger artists who are at most risk. "Work-for-hire contracts prevent young artists from building a catalogue of images they can profit from throughout their careers. And inflation plus higher tuition for art students and the truth for aspiring illustrators is daunting."

The team are getting PACT ready for business as we type this, so keep checking out **www.artpact.com** for more ●

This is one of Aaron Miller's paintings. He's another experienced artist trying to help fellow artists via PACT.

Daniel had to concept a spaceship for Oblivion that would not only look suitably sci-fi, but would work on a practical level, too.

The Bubbleship had to be designed to be comfortable enough for Tom Cruise to spend several days inside it during filming.

The language of shape

Elegant machinery Legendary vehicle designer Daniel Simon explains the design ethos behind Oblivion's eye-catching Bubbleship

Having your concepts scrutinised by Tom Cruise adds a little extra pressure when designing set pieces for sci-fi blockbusters. Such was the case with mechanical expert Daniel Simon, whose designs for the Bubbleship in Joseph Kosinski's Oblivion sought Cruise's ardent approval.

"With the in-camera ergonomics of the Bubbleship, the seat design looks very dramatic," says Daniel, "yet Tom had to be comfortable in it for entire days spent shooting. He tested my designs frequently, and maintaining the approved design under such influences was my biggest creative challenge."

The ship's design was to encompass "the lightweight feel of a Bell 47 helicopter, blended with the elegance and proportions of a dragonfly". Daniel explains that for the intended visual impact behind each shape (or shape language), clean and simplistic volumes would work in harmony with sophisticated proportions.

Be sure to catch our full interview at **www.imaginefx.com**. Oblivion is available on Blu-ray and DVD from 19 August. Check out Daniel's work at **www.danielsimon.com**.

Words of the prophet

Vox populi History had a key part to play in getting the message across in BioShock Infinite

Since its release earlier this year, we've been in love with the sheer beauty of Irrational Games' BioShock Infinite. One of our favourite visual aspects is the representation of social ideals through propaganda.

The task of bringing The Prophet's words to life fell to West Studios, who after researching posters from the turn of the 20th century, wanted to strike a balance between the visual languages of religion and war. "Propaganda art and religious imagery share a similar purpose," says West Studios head Brian Taylor. "The information from both fields is often pared down to be as direct as possible."

Staying authentic to its roots, Tyler wanted the artwork to reflect the quick-fire process carried out by artists of the period. "Poster artists of the late 1800s worked extremely efficiently and so there's a fresh quality to their work. It was important to me that we carried this look into our work as well. I'd push image-making, sure they didn't become too overworked."

BioShock Infinite is out now. To see more of Columbia's finest, head over to **www.weststudio.com**

Tyler and his team visualised BioShock Infinite's shifting political climate

Alvin Lee

"Chun-Li – San Diego Comic-Con commish! Using ballpoint."
www.bit.ly/ifx-alvinl-cl

Miklós Földi

"Artwork by Miklós Földi created in Corel Painter. Original photo: Péter Nagy."
www.bit.ly/ifx-m-foldi

Ian McQue (ianmcque)

"Sea Cliff, acrylic on canvas."
www.bit.ly/ifx-ianmcque-sc

Just finished something you want us to shout about? Send it our way on Twitter (@imaginefx), or find us on Facebook!

Hatboy
by Vaughn Pinpin

SOMETIMES YOU'LL GO THROUGH

SEVERAL PHASES

UNTIL YOU FIND YOURSELF

Fantasy talk Explaining the inexplicable

"All the names, such as ImagineNation, FXPosé and the like, were devised by me and Rob – usually over a game of Mario Kart DS!"

Was launch art editor Steve Gotobed a bit too relaxed about the creation of ImagineFX? See page 44

Greek fantasy

Project unicorn A new digital art convention aims to rewrite history

From 18 to 21 September, the Troia Peninsula in Portugal will be conquered by the Trojan Horse Was a Unicorn Festival – an event as unique as its name.

Making its debut count, 30 artists from VFX, games, film and animation have been selected to teach, learn, drink – and to give Portugal some kudos in the art world.

"There are different purposes for the festival, and clearly one of them is to put Portugal on the digital industry's map," says Serge Birault, who co-created the festival's titular icon along with Jose Alves da Silva. "We also want to provide a real networking experience, which is able to reach different levels of the industry: students, artists, companies, schools and investors."

Such ambitions will result in festival-going customers getting excited, which seems a certainty given the stellar cast of artists.

TROJAN HORSE WAS A UNICORN

The Portuguese art festival promises to be as distinctive as its name. One very lucky competition winner will get a free trip out there!

Aaron McBride, Dan LuVisi and Raphael Lacoste are among many brilliant creatives from companies such as Ubisoft, Blizzard, Framestore and Massive Black set to attend.

The organisers are running a competition with flights, all-access tickets and lodgings for one very lucky winner – for more information visit **www.trojan-unicorn.com**

+deviantWATCH

Here are some of the many gems we found on the pages of deviantART...

Unodu

www.unodu.deviantart.com

Although Unodu can turn his hand to many styles, he seems at his most experimental when creating strange creature companions covered with feathers and scales. Whatever the subject, his approach is unique, often making great use of stylised anatomy and vibrant colours.

Coffeshere

www.coffeshere.deviantart.com

In this portfolio, we found our first ever Lolita-fashioned horse. There are frilly leg warmers and everything! It might not be for those averse to all things cute and cuddly, but Coffeshere's dedication to soft colour palettes and delicate detailing is more intricate than you might think.

Chvacher

www.chvacher.deviantart.com

Having worked for Disney, DreamWorks and Universal Studios, the personal paintings of Christophe Vacher are some of the hidden treasures of deviantART. Whether painting in watercolours or oils, Christophe's creations are elegant – you could easily lose yourself in them.

A selection of the books I've accumulated over the years. One of my favourites is Shadowline by Iain McCaig. I've also got copies of the magazines and books I've been featured in

I use my second screen for reference but also as a TV when I need to take a break, usually by playing on my PS3

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

My beloved Wacom Graphire III. It's around seven years old, and it's still the most useful Wacom ever. Okay, it may look old and dirty, but I love it!

Marta Nael

Keeping friends close Marta keeps her friends and inspirations, including a watchful Yoda, close to hand in her movable studio
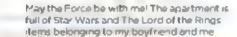
Up until a few months ago, I had always lived in Barcelona, Spain. I now spend half the month in the city and the rest in Ontinyent, a small village where my publisher, Ediciones Babylon, is located.

So I now I need to take my studio on the move with me.

My studio in Ontinyent is located in the living room of a very sunny and small apartment. I have several prints from my friends and work partners all over the place to get some extra inspiration, including Dani

May the Force be with me! The apartment is
full of Star Wars and The Lord of the Rings
items belonging to my boyfriend and me

I have two big
folders with work
from my fine arts
degree and prints
from other artists
who I admire

Marcón and Jorge Monreal. It probably
looks a bit empty to most people, but that's
because I have to move my work stuff
around daily and travel a lot.

My studio is only a short walk from my
publisher's studio. This is really helpful
because it has a huge selection of art books
and they're amazing and crazy people! I
spend lots of time between the two.

Despite working at home, I always wake
up at the same time, so that I can establish
my own routine. This helps me separate
work from real life. This can be really hard
though, as I love my work – for me, it's a way
of living and feeling. I usually spend the
whole day working.

I tend to start the day with a cup of
coffee, then on to checking my emails and
social networks. This sometimes ends up

with being flooded with images by the
artists I follow and several art pages,
jumping from one place to another. I always
end up adding to my reference material
folder, which already has more than 2,000
images in it.

Once I've decided that I'm up to date
and inspired, I'll spend around 10 hours
per day painting.

Because I travel so much, I work on a
MacBook Pro laptop with a large screen.
I usually always have a second screen to
display the reference source I'm using.
Anyway, welcome to my studio.

*Since being crowned one of our Rising Stars
2011 winners, Marta is making final
preparations for her second art book, which
is due out in November. Head over to
www.martamaal.deviantart.com for more.*

This is where I keep sketches and presents from friends and fellow artists. There's
an acrylic canvas by Jorge Monreal, who painted me as a Mexican Catrina.

Imagine**FX** Forum

Winners

Image of the month

Change comes in many forms, but perhaps the most unsettling kind is the one that you think you have total control over…

WIN PRIZES
Congratulations everyone – because this is our 100th issue, you've all won a collection of ImagineFX specials! To win similar prizes, see our Forum challenges at http://community.imaginefx.com/forums.

When Tyl saw the challenge to create an image based on some kind of transformation, the first thing that came to mind was story. "I wanted the expression of my character to tell a tale, experiencing some kind of change as he loses control."

Once settled on the idea of a mad scientist, I spent a lot of time working on the facial areas but especially with the popping eyes and bold expressions. It was keen for the hair and hands to direct the viewer to the face and bottles, which guides the eyes down the picture and back up to the middle again."

Tyl also wanted his creation to create a sense of danger. The cool blue in the dark environment puts my character in a dramatically isolated position, no-one around to help him."

The Change
WINNER **Tyl Destoop (Tyl)**
GALLERY **www.bit.ly/ifx-tyl-d**
ALL ENTRIES **www.bit.ly/mvfx-June**

Tyl's aim was to capture the thrill of risking life for the purpose of scientific experiment, especially when the outcome is unknown.

"Tyl kept his palette simple, but pushed the lighting and contrasts in all the right places. A well-earned top pick!"

Tyl started out with a series of black and white scribbles before using layers to add definition.

The more surprising elements of the composition help direct the viewer around the piece, such as the character's eyes and flying glass.

MYFX TITLE **Turtle Power!**
WINNER **Kory Hamaker (sugar)**
GALLERY **www.bit.ly/ifx-sugar**
ALL ENTRIES **www.bit.ly/myfx-325**

"When I saw this challenge to paint a unique picture of your favourite Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle, I thought about how a different take on the characters could be created. Having just seen the animated film Epic, I thought it would be interesting to create a more accurate representation of a turtle, small scale and all.

"It developed into this piece, and I was really happy with the end result. It was an especially great exercise in trying to achieve a sense of scale."

Even before tweaking Donatello's pose and shell height, Kory's ninja turtle was looking nothing short of cute.

MYFX TITLE **Gone Fishing!**
WINNER **William Palacio (evil-robot2)**
GALLERY **www.bit.ly/ifx-evil-robot2**
ALL ENTRIES **www.bit.ly/myfx-324**

"The task was to depict one of Tolkien's characters taking a break to go fishing. This was a real fun one for me. I usually work in the children's market, drawing fluffy bunnies and kitty cats, so being able to work on something from The Lord of the Rings was thrilling. It was also a chance for me to test out a new painting technique without upsetting any clients.

"I wanted my piece to stand out, so I chose to do the Lord of the Nazgûl. The style of working I used to create this piece has now become my regular approach, so it was a great chance to give it a test run."

At first William was apprehensive about his piece, but a little colour soon made it take shape.

Letters
YOUR FEEDBACK & OPINIONS

Contact the editor, Claire Howlett, on claire.howlett@futurenet.com or write to ImagineFX, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK

Follow us on twitter:
www.twitter.com/imaginefx

Tell us your thoughts on:
www.facebook.com/imaginefx

Great learning resource
First of all, thank you so much for all the workshops, advice and general help you all give. As an aspiring artist I've been so inspired by the content of this magazine, so thank you. The reason I'm writing, though, is to give some attention to this website: www.ctrlpaint.com. I've been finding it so helpful for learning how to draw and I believe more budding artists should know about it. I absolutely love that website and feel the urge to share it.
Pedro Camarinha, via email

Claire replies: Thanks for sharing your resource find, Pedro.

Game dev a go-go
I'm writing to thank you for your publication. I've been an artist all my life, but only recently have I had the courage to make the leap to calling myself professional. I found your magazine almost in lockstep with my decision to make this career move. It was serendipitous for certain. As I leafed through issue 89 I felt I had found irrefutable proof that people actually do what I've always wanted to do – and they get paid for it.

With my monthly shot of confidence and inspiration I'm proud to share the news that our company has just launched our first game development project on Indiegogo (www.bit.ly/gabeindi). Surely

Here's some art from Gabriel Brockman. He was inspired to start up his own development project

some ImagineFX influences can be seen in my concept art.

Also, the Adapt Survive Prevail featuring Francis Tsai (issue 98) blew my mind. Too cool. Thanks for sharing.
Gabriel Brockman, via email

Claire replies: It's letters like these that keep us going when we have crazy deadlines to meet! Gabriel, I wish you every success in your game development and future endeavours. Readers, please do check out Gabriel's project – you never know, it may even inspire you to create a start-up project of your own.

Adapt survive hope
August's issue gave me such hope that I'll never have to give up art. I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis seven years ago, and it does affect the use of my hands at times. Seeing the article on Francis Tsai [Adapt Survive Prevail – issue 98] being able to still create art has given me hope that even if I lose the use of my limbs, I might still be able to make art. Thank you for the article and making me and other artists aware of the technology.
Jennifer Phillip, via Facebook

Claire replies: We received so many emails about artist Francis Tsai and how he tenaciously continues to create art despite his debilitating physical condition, ALS. Jennifer, I wish you well in your quest to keep on painting. For those of you yet to hear Francis's inspiring tale, it really is worth visiting www.teamgt.com for more information.

My art, your mag?
I'm a digital painter and I would like to submit my work for consideration to be featured in ImagineFX. What is the process?
Shweba Maya, via email

Claire replies: Our FXPosé gallery is crying out for fresh artwork from our brilliant readers! Send in your work, along with some words on how you create each piece, the title of each image, a photo of yourself and your contact details. The email address is fxpose@imaginefx.com. Please don't send files larger that 5MB, or we'll have to send the heavies round.

The Adapt Survive Prevail story in issue 98, about Francis Tsai, certainly had an affect on some of you.

We've still got a few copies, but you need to move fast! See page 57 for details on how to get hold of one.

Confidence boost
I follow a trend that ImagineFX is encouraging me to be a creative person. Most of my life I've wanted to work in a creative industry, but I never had the tools available or the knowledge of how to do it. My classmates and schoolmates would often mock me for wanting to work in a creative industry, saying I was living in a dream world and things like that.

Since reading your magazine, that has all changed. I'm preparing to study at university – which I never thought I would do. It's also helped me understand and improve my own work. As you can see, by following your amazing workshops such as Charles Hu's anatomy tutorial from issue 94, my work has improved dramatically.

I hope that one day I'll feel my work is ready to be entered into your Rising Stars campaign. For me that's a huge creative goal and I'm looking for a quick to improve.

Thank you so much to everyone involved in this magazine. Your work really makes a difference.

Also, I can't wait for the next issue just for issue 100!
Sean Harvey, via email

Claire replies: Your work is improving and you're in it for your art. I can see the improvement just by looking at the confidence in your stroke and shading (pictured below). Thanks so much for sending us your work. I'm always thrilled to hear we've inspired or helped by a particular workshop we've featured!

Artist Q&A

GOT A QUESTION FOR OUR EXPERTS? LET US
EASE YOUR ART-ACHE AT **HELP@IMAGINEFX.COM**

The ImagineFX panel

Jane Wallace
A Ringing College of Art and Design graduate, Jane freelances for magazines, books and produces concept art, including for Sims 1
www.ualjwww.cghub.com

Nick Harris
Gloucestershire-based Nick went digital in 2000 after 18 years working with traditional methods. He works mainly on children's illustration.
www.nickillus.com

Mark Molnar
Mark is a concept and visual development artist. He's busy doing freelance work for international film, game and animation companies.
www.markmolnar.com

Paco Rico Torres
Paco is a freelance illustrator living in Spain who's produced art for several card game, magazines, books and role-playing games.
www.pacorico.blogspot.com

Charlie Bowater
Charlie lives in the northeast of England. She works as a concept artist for Atomhawk by day and is a doodler of everything else by night.
www.charliebowater.wordpress.com

Bill Corbett
Bill works as a freelance artist producing illustrations for media groups, public relations companies, small businesses, bands and private clients.
www.billcorbett.co.uk

Tony Foti
Tony is a US freelance illustrator who contributes to D&D, and Fantasy Flight Games' Star Wars and The Lord of the Rings lines.
www.tonyfotiart.com

WATCH THIS!

Question
How can I ensure my painting has a bright, joyous feel to it, using colour and light?
Tom Dougall, England

Answer
Mark replies

One person's definition of happiness will differ from another, but generally speaking saturated colours are usually considered more cheerful in both Western and Eastern societies. This originates from traditional cultural festivals in which people usually dress up in colourful costumes

Bright and saturated colours have always been the symbol of celebration – just think about the carnivals in Rio or Venice, the Holi Festival of Colours in India and Nepal, or the celebration costumes worn by tribal societies, which differ greatly to their everyday clothing

We can also apply modern theories of psychology to suitable colour schemes Warm colours are usually considered more

I want to convey the carnival atmosphere of a victorious army, so I place the whole image in an almost monochromatic yellow-orange tone with added patches of light blues for more contrast and some saturated reds to show a bit of aggression of the soldiers.

inviting, and within the warms the oranges and yellows are the most commonly positive colours. This probably comes from the warm light of the sun and fire – an association that can be found on the subconscious of every human being. These colours are also associated with royalty, nobility and wealth in most cultures

As well as choosing the right colour scheme we can also adjust the value range of the image. Although we can't apply this to every situation, creating a high-key image can help to achieve a brighter mood in the scene. To explain, a high-key image is one in which the lighter values dominate the composition. The middle values and darks are only there to balance out the image and to give the viewer a point of comparison

Step-by-step:
Use colour and light to boost the mood

1 I block in the composition, in which I've already established the colour scheme. I want to depict a sunny day or morning scene, so I use various saturated yellows and oranges. I try to keep the image more high key, but also add some dark values in the foreground to balance them out and to enhance the perspective.

2 I change the composition slightly by adding taller buildings over on the left-hand side. I also bring the main knight closer to the camera, which creates more depth to the image. I then introduce more aggressive-looking, bright reds to the image, to suggest that we're seeing a marching army.

3 To achieve more visual noise I apply photo textures. I then further define the background and introduce more contrasting colours to the crowd and to some parts of the background. Because I want to achieve a rougher finish, the final step is to define the major shapes and edges, and carry out some colour tweaks.

Question
I want to use darkness in a painting for drama, without losing colour and detail. Can you help?
Charlie O'Dair, Ireland

When everything in the piece is pretty light, putting the main figure in shadow is like a magnet for the viewer's eyes

Answer
Tony replies

If you want the focus of a piece to be in shadow, your main goal should be to make that area stand out from the rest of the composition. The most dramatic example, and the one I've used with this piece, is to make almost everything else in the painting quite light. The key to emphasising colour and detail in shadows comes from the thoughtful use of chromatic relationships, as well as knowing which hues are most vibrant in the darker end of the value scale.

Different colours are at their most intense at different values. Yellow, for example, is most brilliant when painted light, but blue and purple are more saturated when they're dark. With the inherent value of purple so low, lightening it involves cutting the pigment with something lighter, such as white.

Whether that means having pale blue fill light, putting the figures in a purple room, or simply sneaking those colours in wherever you like, the result will be more saturation in and around the focal point. Being a fantasy magazine, I'm again going the most dramatic route and simply making our character blue and, well, purple. They are definitely the heavy hitters of the lower values, and this enables me to use dark colour without sacrificing saturation.

If the whole piece is a similar colour, it becomes hard for anything to stand out. Adding a bit of yellow to the background helps push the figure

Artist's secret

AVOIDING FLAT COLOURS

Question
What tricks can I use to draw an attractive female face?
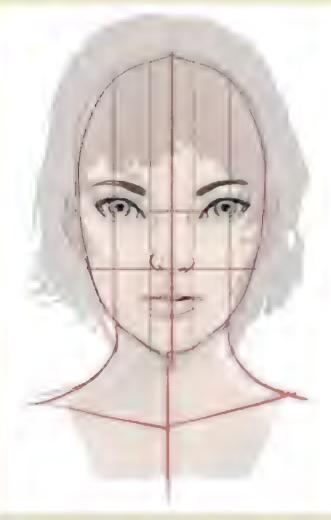*Joe Yarmush, US*

Answer
Jace replies

Like full-body anatomy, it's best to develop a solid, realistic understanding of human physique before applying any stylisation to your portraits. I believe the proportions of the nose and eyes are the biggest factors in portraying the ideal face. That being said, think of the lines and planes that make up a face, and map out the facial components appropriately. As you progress in this task, discover your own unique tricks and style that you can apply to define a lovely face (for example, pin-up, cartoony or advanced realism.)

While it's fun to paint aesthetically pleasing portraits, don't limit yourself to merely one type of stagnant subject. Experiment with radical lighting, expressions, ages and the like. Little details that are often overlooked, such as the warmth of skin or the way light illuminates one's eyes, can make for a charming portrait. It's a balance of capturing anatomy correctly, and adding your own personal touches.

Here are the classic guidelines and proportions used for drawing a face. When depicting a female face I tend to enlarge the eyes and shrink the nose.

These are the steps I take to finish the image. First I lay down the lines and continue adding colours from there. I like to do the hair last and on a separate layer, so I can change it easily if I want to.

Question
Please help me draw a figure in a spotlight, with the light creating interesting shadows
Etsuko Domon, Japan

The shadow's shape is different from that of the character because the light source and the point of view aren't the same.

Drawing a line marking the direction of the light makes things easier. Instinct and observation are more important than mathematical techniques here.

Answer
Paco replies:

The answer to this is in the question. It's all about light! Once you've drawn your character, simply figure out the source of your spotlight and this will dictate where the shadow will be.

In my example, I draw a straight line coming from the powerful spotlight (perhaps it's this wrestler's turn to enter the ring!) that touches the character's head. The point where this line touches a background element, such as the floor or a wall, is where the 'head' of the shadow should be. Then you just need to draw the rest of the shadow according to the perspective and the surface of the element where that shadow is cast, taking into account different angles, irregular terrain and so on. There are mathematical ways to determine the route of the spotlight, but they're unnecessary for a non-technical image like mine.

It's important to remember that a shadow has the shape of the figure blocking the light. So if we view a character from a side and the light comes from the front, then the shape of the shadow will be like the silhouette of the character viewed from the front, not the side.

Question
Can you give me a hand in designing a cool, Celtic-style fantasy tattoo?
Hank Tilsberry, US

Answer
Tony replies

Designing a tattoo always begins with a premise, so the first thing I do is sift through some Celtic mythology to get my mind going. I consider designs based on The Morrigan and Cú Chulainn, but it's the Four Treasures of the Tuatha Dé Danann that seems most fit for body art.

The four treasures are magical items carried by an ancient, god-like race from Irish mythology known as the Tuatha Dé Danann. Arriving from the North in dark clouds, they conquered the Fir Bolg (another mythological Irish race) and ruled Ireland until the arrival of the Milesians from the Iberian Peninsula. From each city of origin, the Tuatha Dé Danann brought a magical item.

From Falias came the Lia Fáil (meaning Stone of Destiny), from Gorias came the undefeatable Spear of Lugh, from Findias the Tuatha Dé Danann brought the Sword of Nuadu, and the Cauldron of Dagda was brought from Murias.

Each of the treasures had mystical powers, and they're still known throughout the world today as an important part of Irish mythology.

Question
I need to add personality to my characters. Can you please show me how to paint unique facial hair?
James Smith, England

Answer
Nick replies

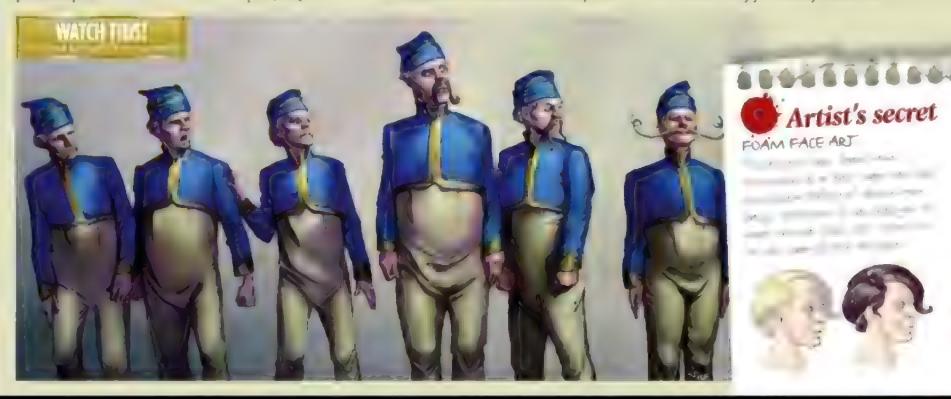Love it or hate it, facial hair can be great for characterisation. We're likely talking more about males than females here, but most females have been known to have eyebrows at least – and in some cases a velvety moustache. However, women tend not to shout about it the way men sometimes do, nor are tempted to sculpt their under-nose adornment into proud shapes.

Just as beards come in all shapes, colours and textures according to the nature and care of the hair in question, so can moustaches. The main thing to remember is that, like the hair on you head, these little critters are attached. Yet while your scalp has very limited range of movement, your top lip is capable of more.

Where the lip moves, the moustache will follow. I find it easier to draw a face without the hair first and then add it afterw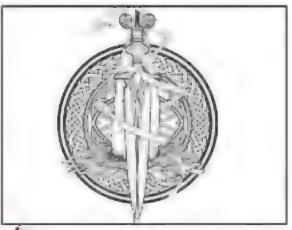ards. It enables me to understand the fleshy form to which it's attached and think about how it might be transformed by facial movement, whatever its original shape. The front of the face is curved. The moustache follows that arc, and also conforms to the perspective of the face when viewed from different angles. Thinking of it as a foam shape rather than hair to start with can help visualise the form more easily, before worrying about making it look like hair. Once you're happy with the shape, lay into it in whatever way you usually render hair.

This work in progress shows a range of styles. The reality of how creative some folk can be with the beasts may surprise you

WATCH THIS!

Artist's secret
FOAM FACE ART

Step-by-step: Design eye-catching skin art

1 Now that I know what I want the tattoo to be of, it's time to brainstorm. Here I've sketched out several possible designs, focusing on ways I can arrange the four items into one cohesive image. Because they're different shapes and sizes, the challenge is to make it feel cohesive.

2 With the basic layout figured out I focus on designing each of the four treasures in the position I'll be using for the final image. Researching ancient Celtic weapons, cauldrons and the actual Lia Fail (located on the Hill of Tara in Ireland) will give the treasures a more authentic feel.

3 Once the composition of the tattoo and the treasures is finalised, it's simply a matter of putting it all together. I use classic Celtic knot designs in the cauldron to reinforce the Irish theme, and some light values to keep each object from vanishing into each other.

ImagineNation Artist Q&A

Question
Can you briefly explain how to use the colour wheel?
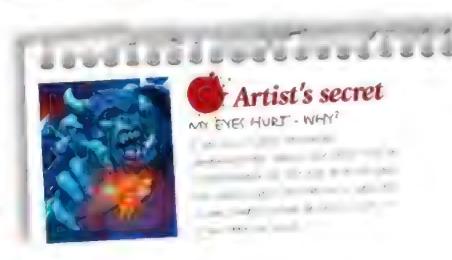*Chelsea Reed, Australia*

Answer
Paco replies

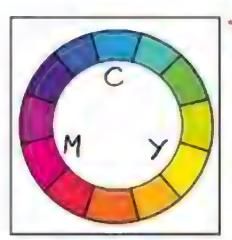A colour wheel is a diagram in which you can organise colours following a logical disposition There are many ways of displaying colours on a colour wheel, but the most common is to place the primary colours on the wheel These are cyan, magenta and yellow, which can't be created by mixing other colours, but can be used to create any colours by mixing them. Then between them put the secondary colours (the colours obtained by mixing equal parts of two primary colours: purple/blue, green and red). Finally, on each side of a secondary colour put a tertiary colour,

which is produced by mixing a secondary colour and the adjacent primary colour The resulting colour wheel enables you to easily determine what colours are complementary by looking at the opposite side of the wheel: orange/blue, red/green, yellow/purple and so on

Why is this interesting? Well, unlike luminosity, colour is subjective. There's not a right or wrong way to use colour, but a common technique for successfully using colour on an image is to combine complementary colours. This works fine most of the time if used properly – in other words, with subtlety and some logic!

This image has a complementary palette. There's a cold background, a warm foreground, a desaturated background a saturated foreground, a dark background and a bright foreground. Subtlety is the key

Artist's secret
MY EYES HURT - WHY?

Step-by-step: Get to know the colour wheel

1 In this colour wheel the complementary colours are on the opposite sides of the wheel You can create grey colours by mixing complementary colours, so using the colour wheel as a guide doesn't mean applying bright, shiny colours Chromatic grey created by mixing colours usually looks better than grey made up of pure black and white

2 For this example I want to paint an orc chasing a fagse As I imagine the scene there will be a dark background and a bright foreground so instead of using a similar colour palette for all the image I choose to use a complementary palette It'll look more appealing and I can separate the foreground from the background to make the image easier to read

3 Even if I choose to use green and blue colours for the background this doesn't mean that I have to use exclusively green and blue The richer your colours are the better As long as I keep the general hues between bluish and greenish I can and I should add slightly different colours such as red or brown, to improve the orc's design and to depict him more clearly

4 By combining two complementary colours, I manage to separate one figure from the other which creates more depth in the image and also a more appealing final composition But I need to remember that the colours are affected by other colours on the scene so I must reflect that If I don't put a bit of orange on the parts next to the fagse, it won't work

Question
Please help me depict a large, abstract structure in space
Kim Wee, China

A mixture of abstraction and impressionism can be used to portray a sense of realism. The human brain has a capacity to make sense of these things!

Answer
Bill replies

An imposing object is normally dictated by size, and because painting something so large and intricate can take a long time, I'll demonstrate a quick and easy way to do this.

Create the background first. This doesn't need to be particularly detailed because the fortress will take up a lot of the canvas. A basic star field will do fine, or even a thin planetary atmosphere will work.

The next step is to build your fortress by overlapping angular shapes in a seemingly random yet abstract way. This will create an impression of girders, panels and general construction. Start with the rough outline of the structure and then work darker and bolder as you progress towards the forward face. Introducing a lighter focus around the fortresses edges will create a slight perspective illusion. Try and mix up the shapes so the patterns are only vaguely uniform.

Next is to add the lights: a mixture of compartment lights and external lights is quite effective. I recommend a radial blur behind the lights to help the intensity a little.

Hopefully you can translate my PaintShop Pro technique to your own painting software.

Question
What advice can you give me on using layers in my digital art?
Jimmy Newbie, US

Answer
Charlie replies

It depends on what you want to get out of those layers. Mostly I'd say don't worry about it too much and just use whichever layers and modes work for you. For ease of working I try to keep my layers to a minimum.

A particularly handy layer option I get a lot of use out of is Create Clipping Mask. For instance, if I have a layer featuring the silhouette of a character that's separate from the background, I can add layers on top of my character, right-click that layer and select Create Clipping Mask. This means that anything you put on to that layer won't extend beyond the silhouette of your character. It's a great way to either add in textures or lighting or to just be a bit messy, because you never have to worry about erasing the edges of the silhouette.

I'm adding a texture to the character's scarf. Without the clipping mask I have to erase the parts that I don't need, but with the option selected it's a real time-saver!

Question
How should I approach painting a pair of tired-looking eyes?
Clare Lindsay, US

Answer
Nick replies

Initially, I imagine my character is suffering from a lack of sleep, but hopefully it'll help if we accentuate the effects. Starting with the eyes, the obvious thing to do is make them look heavy lidded, as though it's hard to keep them open. Perhaps show the iris and pupil half-covered at least. Maybe the eyes are bloodshot, with veins showing more than usual? Perhaps the flesh around the eye is puffy and discoloured? Are there bags under the eyes? The complexion may be sallow, and the face drawn (in the non-artistic sense). It can help to use more purples and greens in the shadows under the cheekbones and eye sockets, while also making the edges of eyelids look pink and sore. Maybe the eyes even look watery? All we need is rotting flesh and we're headed into zombie territory!

The most obvious visual sign of tiredness in eyes is drooping eyelids, but don't forget that the rest of the facial features need to back it up to get the message across.

Do include other visual clues, such as body language, neglected hair – including lack of shaving for men – and anything else that's appropriate for your image.

Question
What are the main things to remember when designing a horror poster?
Beth Marlowe, England

Question
How can I mix Art Deco styles into my fantasy art?
Adam Wilson, US

Answer
Jace replies

Art Deco is a more structured and linear style than, say, Art Nouveau. An easy way to break in a little of Art Deco is incorporating it into your background for a poster-like illustration. Its structured, often symmetrical layout can provide an easy filler of white space. Often you'll be able to use your Pen tool or brush to draw out half of the area you want, and flip it vertically. You can then add more details as you move the image along.
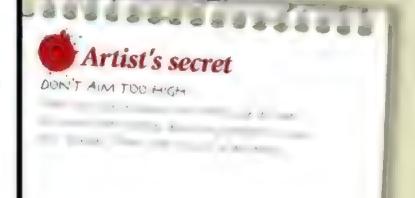
Art Deco is often associated with glamour, ritz and technological progress. You can anchor a living subject with the deep, rich colours, lines and angles associated with the Deco style. For this question I incorporate Art Deco fashion with this mermaid (above). I add some subtle Art Deco design with the rocks and waves, and then more prominently with the background elements.

Art Deco is often married with fashion design, so it's a wonderful idea to incorporate it in your characters. You've likely

seen it displayed in steampunk-themed artworks. Try to experiment with a cityscape in the Art Deco style. Do something different from the typical character paintings and work on a surrealistic scene in the city using the aforementioned lines and angles in the architecture

Art Deco images tend to feature a lot of texture. Here I use a half tone filter on the finished image and then apply the Sketch>Torn Edges filter to create this texture. And it seems to work!

Answer
Bill replies

There are three things I would advise artists to bear in mind when designing a horror poster. First, convey fear. There are many things people are scared of – both primeval and techno – and each person differs in their perceptions. It's important to absorb the story you're portraying and draw out the elements the majority of people find scary. Spiders, snakes and rats are typical for creatures, and the undead, cursed and demons expose people's fears.

Second, make sure the subject is relevant. Ensure your poster keeps within the boundaries of the film or book that it's depicting. Of course, if this is purely a design exercise then you can pretty much do whatever you please!

Third, inspire a feeling of morbid attraction. Horror is a unique art form on its own. As human beings we all have a sense of morbid fascination, be it large or

Even the surreal mixed with the slightly comical can be quite scary for many people. Many of us tend to fear the things that we don't really understand

small. Typically, red, black and white can be incredibly poignant when thinking in colour. If applicable, twisted anatomy, gore and putrid discharge are the props that help create a feel of both fascination and repulsion in the viewer.

Artist's secret

DON'T AIM TOO HIGH

Next month
ON SALE: **13 September**
Design unique futuristic
hair styles for your video
game characters

Question
What's the benefit of painting in black and white?
Panther Spirit, Germany

Answer
Charlie replies

Oh, where do I begin? Painting in black and white is great. It completely cuts out having to think about colour to start with and instead you'll find yourself concentrating on elements such as composition, value, lighting and form.

These are arguably the more important steps. Of course, colour is a vital step, but the benefit of black and white is that you can focus on the image as a whole and resolve any glaring issues before you even get to that stage. Black and white is a great choice for thumbnails – doing this in colour seems to make things more complicated than they need to be. Just pick a few tones; mid-grey, dark grey/black and a highlight

You can thumbnail pretty much anything with just a few simple values: characters, monsters, environments, vehicles. That's part of the beauty of black and white – it's so simple you can translate it to anything and it trains you to focus on the image as a whole, rather than worrying about colour, details and such-like.

Most of the time I opt for a black and white process, whenever I'm creating character designs for instance, so I'm going to use that as an example here. I start out with a simple silhouette and then build up to a refined design. This technique also makes creating any variations on the character very simple too, because there's no need to worry about interfering with any colours you've painted.

Painting in black and white means you can focus on the image as a whole and resolve any glaring issues before you get to [...]

From here it's pretty simple to just keep building up the detail until you're ready to then go to colour or simply leave it as black and white.

Artist's secret
VARY THOSE VALUES!

Step-by-step: Paint shape, values, then detail

1 First things first – I block out the character's basic silhouette. I always try and keep things fairly rough at this point and avoid going into any detail too soon. Whether your character is a little kid or a hulking great giant, this is the time to focus on their shape and try and emphasise their character. Experiment with silhouettes until you find one you like.

2 Once you've painted a shape that you're pretty happy with, it's time to start adding in some values. When doing this I don't tend to use any values that are too bright or too dark. I like to keep things subtle while I'm building up the shape. I keep things pretty sketchy and gently add in some subtle shadows and highlights to find the structure of the body.

3 I'm happy with the shape and structure so it's time to add in details. This is one of my favourite stages and I could happily detail characters all day long. I start to add in those dark shadows and bright highlights to really bring out the form of the character. I stick with a fairly small soft brush, sketch in and then build up those details, refining as I go.

RISING STARS
2013

Three senior art judges explain why they want to see digital art with personality, now more than ever

W hile you may hear the odd traditionalist grumble about digital art's perceived Apple-Z shortcut through any art problem, the world of digital art has its own worries.

"Not so long ago there were just a handful of really good digital artists," says film concept artist Christian Alzmann, "but as the industry has grown, there's more education and more interest." With software easier to use and freeware opening

66 Too many artists are following the same trends 99

up the door even more, "the number of digital artists has vastly increased," he says.

That's no reason to despair, though. There may be more tablet-wielding artists out there, all vying for the attention of Wizards of the Coast senior art directors such as Jon Schindehette, but there are simple ways of getting noticed.

"While I agree that there are more digital artists, I feel the percentage of great digital
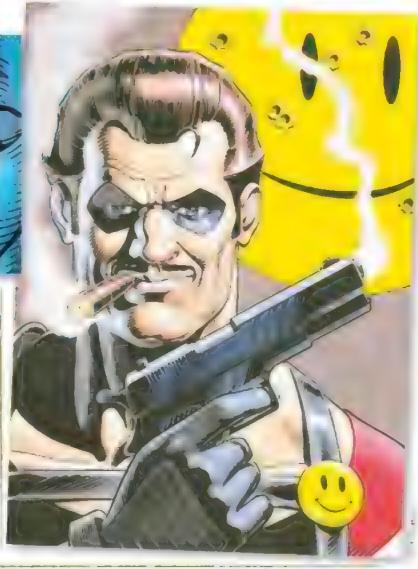
WATCH OUT
Watchmen artist Dave Gibbons loves the skill of storytelling in comic art – but he's looking for personality above all else in the Rising Stars entries.

artists has actually been going down," says Jon. "The problem is too many artists are following the same visual trends, utilising the same tools and techniques, and not as many voices are rising above the din." It's time to step out of your comfort zone, suggests the senior art director.

ImagineFX's Rising Stars has always aimed to give a platform to unique artists. "The thing that's impressed me the most about the entries for the Rising Stars competition has been the growth and

Closing date: 14 October 2013

NURTURING THE YOUNG

Like judge Christian Alzmann, we want to see your unique art vision, no matter how weird and wonderful it may be.

maturity of the art entries," says Jon. "I'm really seeing folks bring their A-game to bear, finding ways to effectively show their distinct voices," adds Christian. "Mark my words, a lot of the entrants are going to be big shots in our industry someday."

Perhaps it's simply because print-and-online competitions such as Rising Stars just didn't exist when our judges were looking for their big breaks back in the day. "The only art competition I entered was at school," says comic legend Dave Gibbons, "but I would have jumped at the chance to enter something like Rising Stars, particularly at the time I was working

on fanzines, trying to get my art seen by everyone."

Rising Stars is all about finding, celebrating and nurturing great talent in digital art. Several previous winners have created stunning workshops and even covers for ImagineFX, and that's a tradition we aim to continue.

There may have been an explosion in the number of digital artists, but these judges agree that honing two areas of your art will help you rise above the rest. "Work on your fundamental skills, like drawing, design and colour," says Christian, "and the other," offers Jon, "is show your personality." ●

THE JUDGES

SAM DIDIER
The Blizzard Entertainment art director has a track record of spotting new artists on forums and turning them into pros
www.blizzard.com

BOBBY CHIU
An illustrator and concept artist for the film and toy industries, Bobby runs Imaginism Studios and teaches around the world.
www.schoolism.com

CHRISTIAN ALZMANN
War of the Worlds, A.I., Star Wars: Episode II... Christian Alzmann worked on all of those films.
www.christianalzmann.com

JON SCHINDEHETTE
Senior art director at Wizards of the Coast, Jon's a great supporter of the art community and his blog is considered to be required reading.
www.thenevershow.com

DAVE GIBBONS
A comic artist since the late 1970s, Dave started on the first issue of 2000 AD, drew Watchmen and continues to be an influence in the industry.
www.davegibbons.com

LAUREN PANEPINTO
With 11 years of designing and art directing book covers, Lauren has worked in illustration, concept art and in the sci-fi/fantasy genres.

HOW TO ENTER

Entrants are invited to submit five pieces of portfolio work and a short biography. You can submit digital or traditional art, or a mixture of both. Each image needs to be 2MB or under. We hope to see thousands of amazing artworks, so make sure you pick pieces that best reflect your skills. **The deadline is midnight GMT, 14 October 2013**
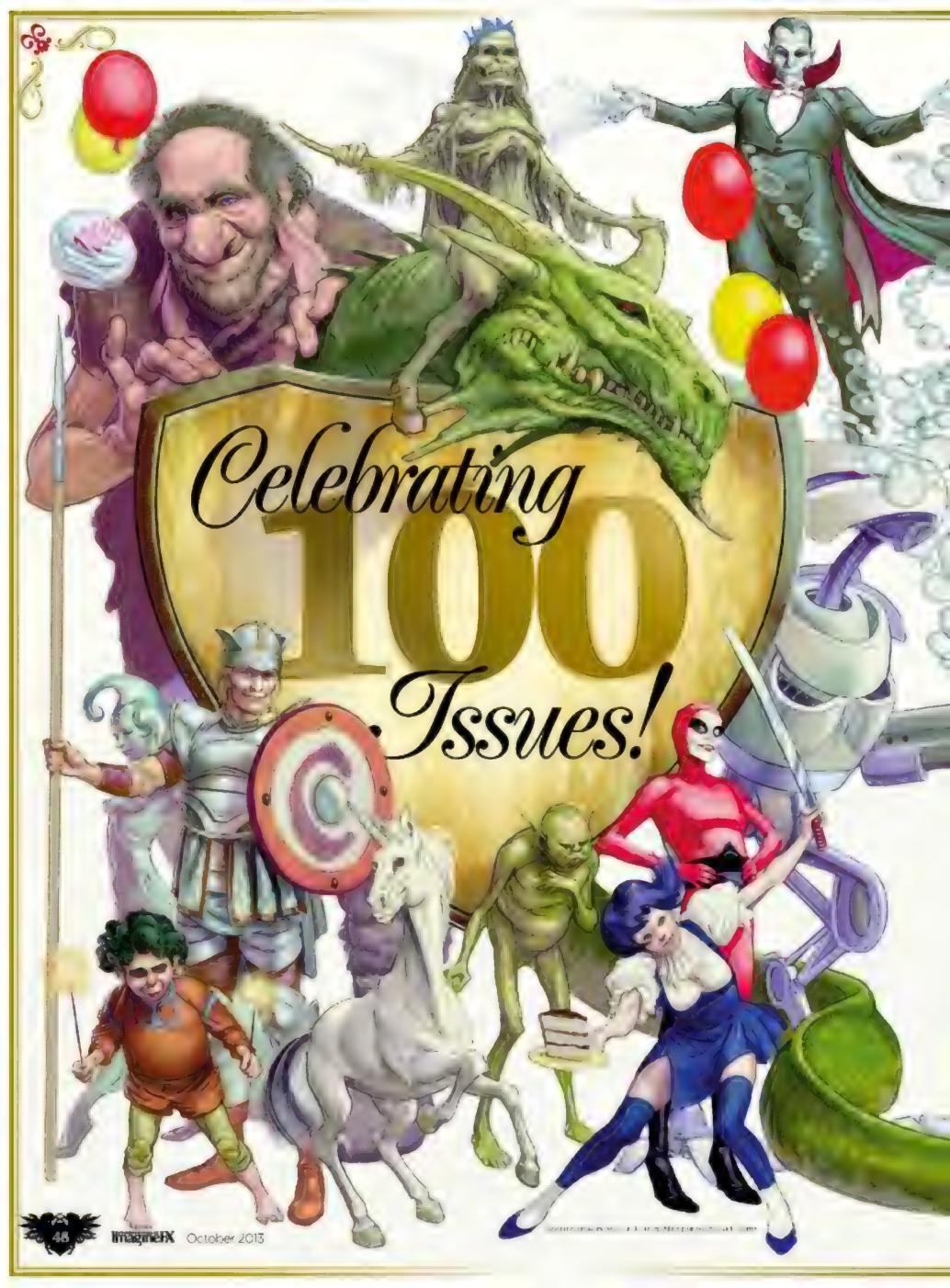
Enter online today at:
www.futurecomps.co.uk/rising-stars-2013

Postal entries should be sent to:
Rising Stars 2013, ImagineFX, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK

Celebrating 100 Issues!

Back in 2006 **ImagineFX** was launched to reach out to digital fantasy and sci-fi artists across the globe. Seven years later, and as we hit the 100 issue mark, we invite you to look at our highlight reel so far...

he cover literally shone out from the newsstand," says Kaz Wright, who's been reading ImagineFX since issue two and

discovered us while out shopping. "It was everything that I wanted in an art magazine: fantasy, digital art, a beautiful cover image. I was hooked it was love at first sight!" Kaz is one of the thousands of artists who regularly read ImagineFX, and what's fantastic for us is that so many of them are just as passionate about the magazine as she is We've been humbled and, frankly, a little embarrassed, by all the kind messages we've received since we started preparing for this, our 100th issue.

It's been such an exciting journey getting here, and there are so many highlights. Ask our associate editor Ian Dean about his

favourite issue, and his answer is instantaneous. "Issue 74, The Art of Star Wars," he says. "Because we got some great interviews, such as Iain McCaig, and we had a workshop by Aaron McBride, who painted a mech in the Star Wars universe. We also interviewed Ralph McQuarrie, who sadly passed away shortly afterwards."

66 ImagineFX was everything that I wanted in an art magazine… it was love at first sight 99

STAR WARS
We used Greg and Tim Hildebrandt's art for the cover of issue 74's Star Wars special, in which we explored the art of the classic trilogy and the prequels.

CRAFTING THE PREQUELS

COMIC MASTER
We've had many comic legends in the pages of ImagineFX, but Moebius was a joy to interview – understated and humble. A true legend.

Annie Stegg
Pro Artist
"ImagineFX is an invaluable resource for artists. The workshops, interviews and galleries are inspirational, and help to connect fantasy artists all around the world. There is truly no other magazine like it"

Todd Lockwood
Pro Artist
"ImagineFX is an outstanding resource for artists of every calibre It's like having an art museum wrapped in a school show up in your mailbox every month"

Claire Howlett
Editor
"When I first had to start contacting legendary artists about appearing in the mag, I always got stupidly giddy with excitement when they not only replied, but also knew who we were and loved what we do! That excitement still holds today"

That same issue contained a workshop with Greg Hildebrandt who, with his twin brother Tim (RIP), created the iconic poster artwork for the very first Star Wars film back in 1977. He even told us how they used a photo of his wife in her nightgown as the basis for Princess Leia. The issue went out in packaging resembling that of the plastic Star Wars figures sold back in the 1970s, with the Hildebrandt's painting resplendent on the front cover

ART HEROES
Issue 74 was a triumph, but Greg Hildebrandt is one of the many artists who has worked with ImagineFX since its very earliest days. He and his brother were profiled way back in issue eight. There have been so many other huge names on our humble pages, too – Brian Froud, Dave Gibbons, James Gurney, Moebius and Todd Lockwood for example. And let's not ➡

ART HELP: CASE ONE

PJ Holden notes how one reader's painting skills have improved

Daniel Lopez
Spain
www.danlopillustration.com
Frank Frazetta
Issue 89, Remko Troost

Imagine-X played a special role in my formation as an artist. First as an eye-opener in my early days when I was trying to break into the industry, and now as a professional as an invaluable source for inspiration and keeping up to date with trends and new artists. I come from Colombia and back there I had no idea there was such a vibrant world of artists and styles. The magazine definitely showed me a new level of art and gave me a kick up the arse to get my drawings out there. Since then I've moved to the UK and then Spain to work as a lead artist in the video games industry."

Pro artist: PJ Holden
PJ is known for his 2000 AD work inking Judge Dredd and Rogue Trooper among others. His workshop in issue 95 has proved popular.

PJ says: Let the art do the talking
"I really like this, it's a fun, well-drawn little comic strip, a little slice of animal life. I think it's a piece like this where there's no dialogue. Really doesn't need an 'Attack!' Comics are all about letting the readers fill in those little gaps - Scott McCloud called it 'closure' - the reader fills in the missing pieces."

1 LETHAL (2010) "This personal piece was special on different levels. I was trying to set a mood by restricting my colour palette, and was conscious about telling a story with an open ending, so the viewer would get involved and make up a story."

2 GAMES OF LIFE AND DEATH (2007 AND 2012) "These two pieces are the best examples of my evolution thanks in part to ImagineFX. This is for an eight-page story I wrote in 2005. I added the inks in 2007, but that was all I did because I wasn't confident about my colours. The tutorials about colour in ImagineFX have helped and I resumed work on this in my spare time. I'm really happy how 2012's colour version turned out."

3 BLACK SMEAR (2012) "This was an exercise based on some brushes supplied in the magazine. I've learned a lot about the use of brushes, but one must be careful not to rely too much on them or the final artwork may look repetitive."

4 CHANCE (2013) "This is basically what I do at work. It sums up a few basic concepts about light, mood and composition, and it was done really quickly with broad strokes, trying to convey a sense of dynamism in the image."
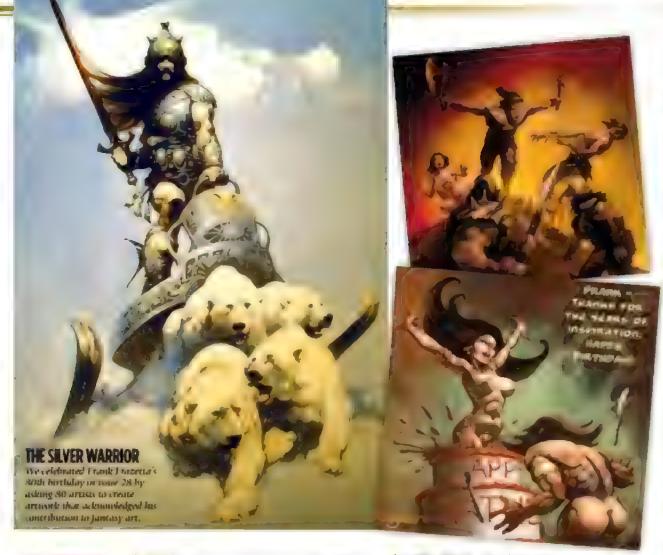

PJ says: Colour me impressed!
"There's a clear progression in drawing ability and the fantastic colouring which moves it from being a cartoony fun strip into something a little bit more sinister. One of the things you want to do with readers is build expectation, so I'd be tempted to swap panels two and three around. The ominous shadow over the praying mantis is a sure-fire way to build tension in the scene."

PJ's advice: Use silhouettes

THE SILVER WARRIOR
We celebrated Frank Frazetta's 80th birthday in issue 28 by asking 80 artists to create artwork that acknowledged his contribution to fantasy art.

FRANK – THANKS FOR THE YEARS OF INSPIRATION. HAPPY BIRTHDAY.

forget Marta Dahlig, who's inspired a legion of readers. "My favourite is the 'Paint a realistic fantasy female' workshop by Marta Dahlig in issue 70," says ImagineFX forum member and moderator Charlotte Ahlgren.

Owners of issue 32 have a piece of history in their hands. Inside are interviews with both HR Giger and Syd Mead. Other editors might have split these great artists of 1980s concept art across two separate issues. But the man who launched ImagineFX, Rob Carney, decided to go in with both barrels loaded. The Terminator wouldn't have pushed just one shell into his sawed-off shotgun, after all…

Our highlight reel can't omit one of the most famous fantasy artists of them all –

Frank Frazetta. Issue 28 celebrated the great man's 80th birthday in style. "I really loved the Frank Frazetta issue," says Kev Crossley. "Along with 79 other artists I was asked to contribute a Frazetta-inspired drawing, and it was only in doing it that I realised how much the guy had inspired me. When the

> ## 66 When the magazine came out the sheer range and quality of all the other artists involved was a sight to behold! 99

magazine came out the sheer range and quality of all the other artists involved was a sight to behold!"

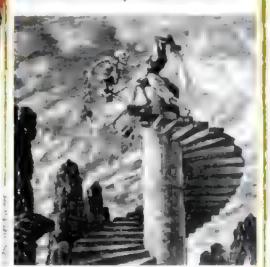Editor Claire Howlett has a different memory of that particular issue. "It was my grand idea to ask 80 artists to paint individual tributes to the great man," she laughs. "The sudden influx of near-naked,

THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD
Here's Ray Harryhausen's art for the classic fantasy film. We celebrated Ray's ground-breaking work in issue 55

HYPERVAN ON CRIMSON PLAZA
Syd Mead's name is synonymous with sleek, futuristic design, as any viewer of Blade Runner knows. We chatted to him in issue 32.

DRAGON·CON

ART HELP: CASE TWO

Three years of art advice has helped one reader, says Nick Harris

🇺🇸 **Jon Hrubesch**
US
www.jonhrubesch.deviantart.com
James Gurney, Kieran
Yanner, Andrée Wallin, Michael C Hayes,
Jesper Ejsing
Issue 90, Glenn Rane

From the moment I saw the cover of ImagineFX I knew this was exactly what I was looking for. Reading the magazine has given me knowledge and understanding of digital art, but it's also opened my eyes to all the opportunities available in the industry. That was four years ago and I've been getting the magazine ever since. With the help of ImagineFX I've gone from building a decent portfolio to getting work as a freelance artist. And my art will be in this year's EXPOSÉ 11.

Pro artist: Nick Harris

We first featured Nick's art in issue 21 back in 2007, and the English illustrator's been firmly associated with ImagineFX ever since.

Nick says: A good first effort

"Classic sci-fi/fantasy fare and a really good early effort at digital colouring, bringing texture and interest into the characters to contrast against the smooth sky and simple background. The figure isn't quite as convincing as the raptor, but it still works as a scene."

Nick's advice: Onwards...

Never get complacent is my key here. Keep working on improving your core drawing and painting skills. Consider the technology and textures on a deeper level and how you turn a good drawing into a good painting. Never think that you have learned it all. Here I'll be drawing with him to discuss potential ways to improve on his images so far.

1 RAPTOR WITH SOLDIER (2009) "This is a pen and ink image that I coloured digitally. I created it as inspiration for a fantasy book I wrote, titled The Wizards of Pangea."

2 JUPITER ATTACK (2012) "Issue 47's SketchUp techniques article by Alex Jenyon opened my eyes to the free 3D tool SketchUp, which I used here."

3 THE HUNT (2012) "I wanted to paint something sci-fi featuring multiple planets. This image made it into this year's EXPOSÉ 11."

4 LAST STAND (2013) "Another image to illustrate my book The Wizard of Pangea."

5 FAIRY GROVE (2013) "The workshop 'Capture the drama in a scene' in issue 91 helped me in many ways. From how to use textures wisely, to paying attention to details and enhancing the atmosphere, Nacho Molina's advice helped me to push this painting to a finish that's much better than it would otherwise have been."

Nick says: I'll drink to this one!

"A lovely idea, clearly shown. Difficult lighting and textural effects that are well handled demonstrate how far you've come on digitally in a few years. Close-ups like this are notoriously difficult and while I think the drawing on the face could be tweaked, he has buckets (or should it be tankards?) of character to compensate. Very well done!"

THE HUB OF TIME

As Issue 69 proved, Daniel Dociu's art for Guild Wars 2 is just one example of digital fantasy landscapes becoming more complex and engaging

LANTERNS AND ARROWS

We're big fans of comic art, and in issue 67 we focused on the expressive line work of the one and only Jim Lee

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➤➤ flesh-coloured images arriving my inbox prompted our IT department to shut my email account down. They thought I was up to something dodgy!" Despite these challenges (and red-faced explanations with IT), the effort was definitely worth it.

INSPIRING OTHERS

Even artists circumspect about Frazetta's work took up the challenge. "I might be committing blasphemy here, but I've never really liked his art," says Lauren K Cannon. "The invitation to take part was the first time I felt the need to take a closer look at Frazetta's illustrations, and it made me appreciate him more. I'm still not a big fan, but his control of all the fundamentals – composition, colour, value – is what I find the most inspiring about his work."

> ## 66 It is a great thing that, aside from teaching readers, ImagineFX offers exposure to the best ones 99

In saying that, Lauren touches on an important point about ImagineFX. The magazine has never only been a showcase. With our workshop and Q&A sections, we've tried hard to break down just how great art is created – often step-by-step. If you'd ever wondered how Ray Harryhausen or Jim Lee developed their ideas, we showed you their sketchbooks in issues 55 and 67, respectively

After going from inspiration to actual creation, ImagineFX has always offered readers the chance to show off their work, in the FXPose pages in print and online, for instance. According to Marta Dahlig this has only enhanced the magazine's success and longevity. "It is a great thing that, aside from teaching readers, ImagineFX offers exposure to the best ones," she says. "I know how important it is to see your work published, especially if it's your first time, and therefore featuring readers' work is a wonderful thing."

MAKING THE ART JUMP

First a reader, then a contributor – ImagineFX takes relations with its readers to a whole new level. It's difficult to objectively gauge just how much impact ImagineFX has had on

Cliff Hope
Operations Editor
"So there's me, new to the mag and a huge Drew Struzan fan, suddenly having to edit a transcript of his training video, in which the great man explains how he painted the Hellboy poster. Luckily, he said I did a good job. And I still have that email."

Ian Dean
Associate Editor
"In my first week on ImagineFX I interviewed Brian Froud, one of my childhood idols. As jobs go it really doesn't get better unless you count also chatting with Moebius, William Stout and Sorayama... yep, it got better!"

the development of fantasy and sci-fi art over the seven years since we launched. However, the standard of the artwork in the pages of the magazine itself has definitely improved and evolved – the bar has been raised and so has the level of ambition among everyone who contributes. Jason T Reyes has been reading the magazine since the first issue. "There has been a steady increase in detail up to the current issue – a cleaner look, perhaps due to the use of more 3D models rather than the brushwork of painted pieces. ImagineFX definitely has more female ➤➤

THE READERS SPEAK!

You let us know why you enjoy every issue of ImagineFX...

Jason T Reyes
US
www.stufficreate.com
Ian Miller
Issue 85, Sakimi Chan

ImagineFX has given me a better sense of the types of artists who are working around the world using different line and colour treatments and styles. Because of this I've started to pay more attention to composition, how outlines are applied – if needed – and perspective, and most importantly the application of colour. The variety of styles showcased is definitely overwhelming, but this feature has made ImagineFX an excellent source of reference and guidance. I have yet to fully migrate to digital illustration, so I'm happy that the magazine also showcases traditional art!

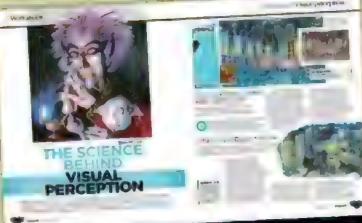**Izzy Reza**
See Izzy's Facebook page
Yoshitaka Amano
Issue 64, Dan Scott

I've been obsessed with ImagineFX since around 2007. I saw in the mag an illustration of Grimmjow from Bleach and I have been hooked on your magazine ever since. It was when I bought the Art 2 of Fantasy Creatures issue in May 2010 I started to delve deeper into your workshops. Although I was a graphic design major working for a two-year associate's degree with my goal of being a concept artist for games, my passion for illustration started to explode from that point. Concept art and illustration are two of my biggest passions.

Nicolas Lachance-Brais
Canada
www.visuart-brais.blogspot.ca
Kekai Kotaki, Stephan
Martinière, James Gurney, Raymond
Swanland, Andrew Jones
Issue 55, Raymond
Swanland

I first got ImagineFX at issue 18 and two months later I subscribed. To this day I haven't missed a single issue. The numerous workshops have helped me structure my painting and make my work more smoothly. I particularly remember Revolutionary Digital Actors by Andrew Jones in the June 2011 issue. It helped me see my art in a whole new way and shook up the established way that my art used to take.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND
VISUAL PERCEPTION

TOP DIGITAL ART

TOP READER WORKSHOPS

Here are six pro artists that you loved seeing at work

1. ISSUE 73 Cover workshop by **Mélanie Delon**
2. Design a fantasy heroine, by **Hyojin Ahn**
3. Paint a woman, by **Charlie Bowater**
4. Combine digital and real elements, by **Drazenka Kimpel**
5. Paint a realistic fantasy female, by **Marta Dahlig**
6. Paint an epic alien battle, by **Luke Mancini**

LUCY

We first came across Dan LuVisi and his Medusa character back in Issue 42. His break from traditional to digital art is an inspiration

EARLY BLOOM

We consider Bobby Chiu to be a friend of the mag, and the Imaginism Studios founder painted issue 72's cover

heroines and robotics than in earlier issues. One big difference I notice is in the backgrounds and landscapes. They're a lot more detailed compared to earlier issues and the art just keeps getting bigger and better. We don't just see forests, castles and ruins, we now see huge futuristic cities, up to planetary scale!"

One of the things that pleases Ian Dean the most is how artists who work with ImagineFX have stepped onto the world stage. "We interviewed Dan LuVisi early on, and now he's inspiring young artists with his work," he says. "We did a workshop with Serge Birault, who's now a major inspiration. Bobby Chiu has done a cover, a workshop and Q&As for us, and he now runs Imaginism Studios. There's Stanley Lau, who did the Pepper cover for issue 43, he's now one of Asia's pioneering digital comic artists. Jason Chan did the issue four cover and has made his breakthrough from

66 You've given fantasy and sci-fi a reach that it would not have had 99

digital art into the mainstream, and he's this issue's celebratory cover artist."

The progression is there to be seen, but what difference has the magazine made to the bigger picture, so to speak? How has fantasy and science fiction artwork changed since ImagineFX has been doing its thing?

For Greg Hildebrandt, the magazine has brought added credibility to the scene. "For many years the art world looked at fantasy

Nicola Henderson
Staff Writer

"I was a regular reader before I started writing for ImagineFX and so joining the team was a real honour for me. Admittedly, I've fallen into the 'I'll try to follow that tutorial later' camp, but with being a life-long Oddworld fan I've always loved Raymond Swanland's Medusa workshop in issue 55. It's such a brilliant take on the myth."

Beren Neale
Digital Editor

"ImagineFX's success relies on the enthusiasm of artists, and speaking to James Gurney is like a personal master class in informed passion. For me, he epitomises why fantasy art has the potential to communicate, amaze and inspire."

Koshime
Pro Artist

"Every month, ImagineFX both inspires and nourishes creatives worldwide, by bringing accessible content and fostering a great sense of community, and our digital art world is all the more richer for it."

representational art as kitsch – beneath the realm of collectible art by serious art collectors," says Greg. "Today, serious art collectors wish they had started buying it in the 70s. Your magazine has given fantasy and sci-fi a reach that it would not have had. You present it as a serious art form and I believe that's a major part of why it is looked at that way today."

Bring on the next 100 issues! ●

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the latest issues of ImagineFX
FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

Sketchbook

Win this art-filled book!

We've been passing around a sketchbook to many of the world's greatest artists – and it could be yours!

TERRYL WHITLATCH
"Very quick, on-the-spot sketch jotted down while booth manning at Spectrum Fantastic Art Live 2. During lunchtime, I believe."

STEVE ARGYLE
"I've always loved the subtle mystery of a face-painted spell-weaver. It implies tradition and ritual while being unrefined and wild. You get a sense of characters wielding power beyond their control."

TYLER JACOBSON
"I love drawing horns and playing around with how they curve, so I felt a demon would be a great opportunity for that."

LOTERA COMING 2014
www.lone-boy.com

AARON
MILLER
"I used pencil, watercolour
and some highlights of gold
marker to sketch out this
image of a faun while at
Spectrum Live."

"I love the play of abstract shapes smoke can
provide. Mix that with Gandalf and you
have a winning combination"

DAN SCOTT
"Dragons are one of my favourite things to sketch.
Sketchbook drawings give me a good opportunity
to play around with their design and possibly, to
come up with something interesting
I could use in a future painting."
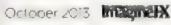
DONATO
GIANCOLA
"I always love the play of abstract
shapes smoke can provide, especially
for a portrait. Mix that smoke with
Gandalf and you have a winning
combination for me!"

CHARLES VESS
"This is Yvaine from the novel Stardust,
Being a Romance Within the Realms of
Faerie, written by Neil Gaiman and
illustrated with 175 paintings by myself,
originally published in 1997 by
DC/Vertigo."

Sketchbook

SEAN ANDREW MURRAY

"A member of the Order of the Seeing Claw, Munro travels the swamps South of Gateway searching for recruits and rare hops for his Order's brewery."

JIM PAVELEC

"I started this image with a pounce technique, using powdered graphite to create large areas of mid tone. With a few well-placed taps of the pounce I can get an overall shape that I like very quickly and then go in with pencil and eraser to work out the details."

"I used a pounce technique with powdered graphite to create large areas of mid-tone"

JUSTIN GERARD

"This is a quick study drawn of a friendly magpie I once met while on a bike ride. The woods east of here where I live, are full of them."

ANNIE STEGG

Annie mixes Rococo influences with her love of fantasy and fairytales in this sketch of a young girl exploring her woodland realm.

STANLEY LAU

Stanley took time out from his San Diego Comic-Con schedule to scribble down this wonderful sketch of his creator-owned character named Pepper

ALVIN LEE
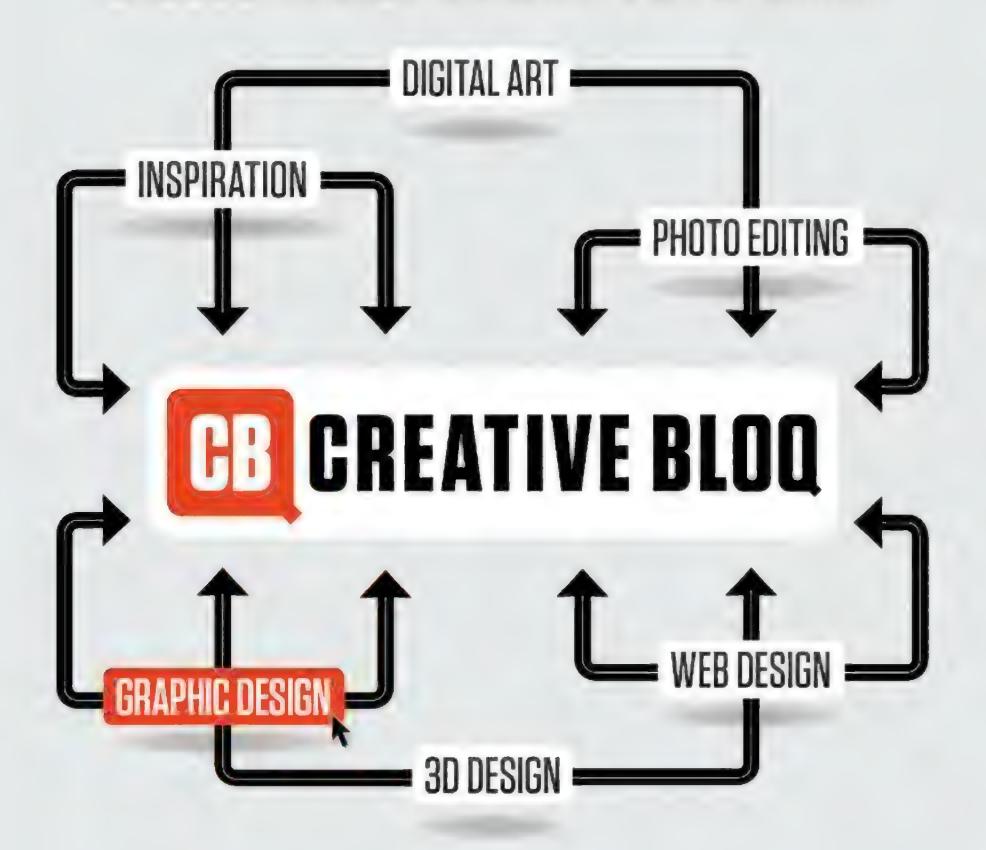
"Psylocke has been one of my favourite X-Men. I took this opportunity to illustrate her using blue-pencil to sketch. Zebra ball-point and Copic markers to finish."

MARK POOLE

"I revisited a painting I completed in 2010 entitled Snow Blind, which was the back cover for the Spectrum 18 (hardback). I don't like repeating myself in sketchbooks – I like the challenge of drawing something new so no two sketchbooks ever have the same drawing."

To win the sketchbook, visit www.futurecomps.co.uk/100sketch

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

Imagine FX

Workshops

22 PAGES OF TUITION

Advice from the world's best artists

This issue:

Photoshop

STREAMLINE YOUR PAINTING PROCESS

Digital illustrator and concept artist Jason Chan takes us through his efficient working process in Photoshop when creating a cover illustration

Digital painting has become an industry standard in print illustration, concept design, video game and film production, and just about every other avenue of art and design. In these demanding fields, artists need to develop a workflow that enables them to produce quality work which is appealing, but can also be accomplished in a timely fashion and allows for revision and iteration in a relatively painless manor. Digital art is nothing if not versatile

In this workshop, I'll be going over the basic workflow process that I follow when creating illustrations in Photoshop, using this issue's cover illustration as an example. Over the years, my process has changed to meet the challenges of the work environment and I'll share a few tips that I've found helpful in creating art in a streamlined and efficient manner. I'll also cover a few Photoshop tricks that I find useful, and discuss various layer types and the ways that they can be utilised to best effect.

This workshop will be most useful for people who have a basic understanding of illustrating in Photoshop and have some experience with drawing and painting. I'll also cover a few theories, concepts and considerations that go through my mind as I work, which apply to painting in general. I believe it's important to understand that Photoshop – or any other digital painting program – is simply a tool. A good grasp of general art knowledge and theory will be what really helps artists create beautiful digital imagery

Artist
PROFILE
Jason Chan

Jason is a concept artist for Massive Black Inc, and has contributed to titles such as Dragon Age, Mass Effect 3, Infinity, League of Legends and Zombie Playground. Jason is also a freelance illustrator and Magic: The Gathering artist.
www.jasonchanart.com

DIRECT LINK FOR WORKSHOP FILES

① Sketch exploration

I start every painting with a black and white sketch. I use a variety of painting and drawing techniques to describe the image that I have in mind. I'm not overly concerned with fine detail or rendering at this stage, and just want to explore value and composition. I try to keep this step loose if possible, to allow for flexibility when I go on to detail out the image

② Colour comp

For this image, I create a colour comp before moving on to finishing the image, when I'll coordinate with the art editor who'll work on top of my image, creating this issue's cover. Like the sketch phase, I use a variety of techniques to explore colour: I need to find a scheme that I like. The key to quickly experimenting with colours is by painting transparently using different layer types.

③ Transparent painting with layers

Normally, when painting in Photoshop, layers are automatically set to Normal. This makes the paint on that layer behave opaquely, covering everything below it. Using this type of layer to experiment with colour is difficult because it covers up the initial sketch. However, using other layer types will result in the paint only affecting the appearance of your layers, instead of completely obscuring them. By understanding how different layer types work, you can quickly add and adjust colour in your painting.

Separating elements into groups

Once I have my painting planned out, I take some time to separate all of the image elements and organise them clearly into groups. In this piece, I separate the girl by her limbs and further separate each limb by material, such as skin and jewellery. This enables me to do things such as paint her torso without worrying about her overlapping arm, or adjust the contrast of her jewellery without messing up her skin.

Overlay layers

Overlay layers are great tools for transparently painting an image and can be used to brighten areas using light values, darken areas with dark values, and to tint areas with colour. All of these effects happen transparently, preserving the information in lower layers. This works well with greyscale sketches: you can add colour to the image without worrying about value at the same time.

Multiply layers
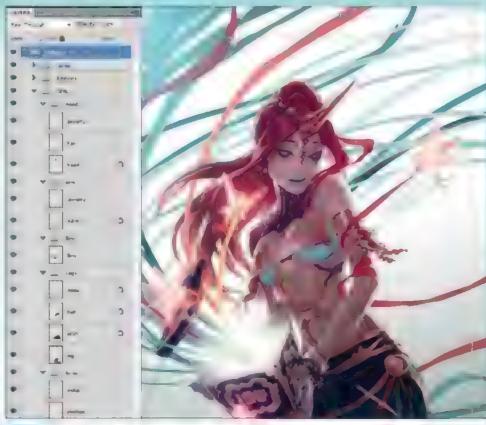
A Multiply layer is much simpler than an Overlay layer because it only darkens the image. I think of a Multiply layer like working with markers. When you take a red marker and colour over another colour, it doesn't cover that other colour the way paint would, but instead makes it darker. This makes Multiply layers great for tasks such as darkening areas of an image, adding stains and washes of colour, or adding line work.

Rendering forms

I now begin rendering all of the major forms. I'm not too concerned with minor details at this point and just want to establish the major structures. This is also the time to figure out how all of the elements will be lit, before delving into minor details. Establishing major forms enables you to correct drawing and painting mistakes before you become too married to parts of your painting.
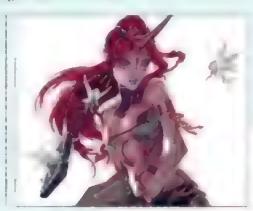
How to render forms

There are a number of techniques you can use to render form in Photoshop. I like to use 100 per cent Opacity brushes and deliberately put down paint. I also like to use Hard, Chalk and Sharp brushes to chisel out forms. Soft circle brushes can be useful to lay down large areas of value, but I try to avoid using them for any kind of detail. Smudge tools can also be useful for softening hard brush strokes.

Refine my forms

Once all of the major forms are laid in, I go back through and add an additional layer of form detail. This is a good time to apply detail to hair, define anatomy, refine facial expressions, sculpt cloth, or add complexity to ornamentation and props. This is often one of my longest process stages because I tend to repaint over all of the surfaces to better describe the forms.

10 Place your patterns in perspective

When creating complex patterns on planes in perspective, it's sometimes faster to paint the pattern flat and then warp it on to your desired surface. Simply create a layer and paint the surface as if you were looking at it flat. Then select Edit>Transform>Distort and line up the corners of the pattern with the corners of the surface you wish to detail, or adjust to your liking. For curved surfaces, use Edit>Transform>Warp
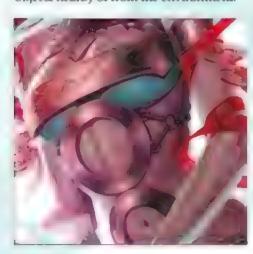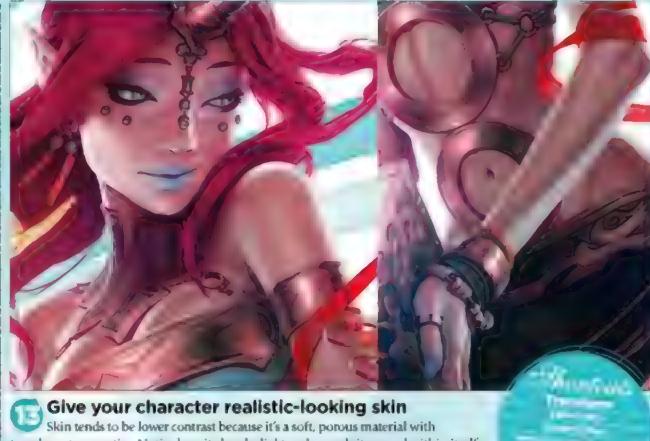
11 Painting surfaces and materials

Beyond just describing light and shadow, understanding how different surfaces and materials react to light can greatly improve the complexity of a painting. Different materials have different properties that affect how they absorb and reflect light. Understanding these properties and how to mimic them convincingly can help create the illusion of different surfaces that the viewer can quickly recognise. A sword made of steel has a much different connotation than one that looks like it's made of plastic.
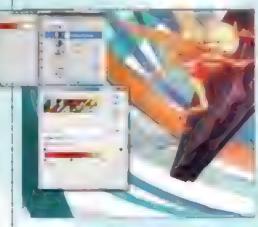
12 Depicting metal

Metallic surfaces tend to have higher contrast compared to most materials. Metal is hard, often shiny, reflective, and not porous, translucent or transparent. When painting metal, you have to pay attention to what's around it. Areas hit by direct light will often have hot highlights, while shadow areas can become dark. However, the shadow areas can have strong reflected light either from objects nearby or from the environment.

13 Give your character realistic-looking skin

Skin tends to be lower contrast because it's a soft, porous material with translucent properties. Notice how it absorbs light and spreads it around within itself. This is called subsurface scattering. Because the light seeps through the surface in this way, it results in softer value shifts. In most lighting conditions, skin tends to stay in a mid-value, having few dark shadows and few hot highlights

14 Self-illumination

To create the illusion of light coming from within the bodies of the faeries, I pair a Gradient Map to the creatures that enables me to assign specific colours to specific values, giving me precise control over their colour ramping. To create a Gradient Map, select the layer you wish to assign it to, then pick Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Gradient Map. Check the box to have this effect only apply to the previous layer.

15 Translucent materials

Translucent materials are surfaces that aren't see through, but which light is able to pass through. Here, I attempt to make the girl's skirt and the ribbons translucent. To achieve this effect, I start by painting the surfaces as if they're not translucent. Afterward, I paint in more vibrant colour in areas I believe to be the most translucent. In this case it's areas with a direct line to the background with nothing in between

WORKSHOP BRUSHES

DEPICT A FANTASY FIGHTER PLANE

Photoshop

In honour of ImagineFX's 100th issue, Raymond Swanland breaks down his digital painting process as he creates a living, breathing fighter plane

When I was asked to join the many artists to take part in the celebration of the 100th issue of ImagineFX, it was a no-brainer to dive right into the party. It's been my pleasure and honour to have been included in the pages of ImagineFX in the past and I can't think of a better way to commemorate the milestone than to make a little art.

I'll be putting together a workshop around an illustration of a creature design, with a wink and a nod towards the number 100. The focus will be on the design, but the goal is also to have a nice, well-balanced and fully rendered illustration at the end of the process.

I work entirely in Photoshop on an Apple Mac Pro, with a 6x9-inch Wacom Intuos tablet setup. I approach the process of painting digitally similar to the way I learned with acrylic paints, brushes and an airbrush. I've acquired some purely digital techniques over the years, but my process is still simply about the basics of colour, lighting and composition.

1 Ideas and concept
I'm given a blank canvas for this workshop, with just the inspiration of including the number 100 somewhere within the image. Gravitating towards creature design, I think of something with speed. I explore the idea of a running creature with cheetah speed, or the animal version of a racing yacht, but what I finally decide upon is a living version of a fighter jet. Taking the idea more literally, I wonder if the number can be incorporated into the insignias of some kind of flying feral air force. And away we go…

2 Create colour comps
Although I often just start straight in with colour on the computer these days, I do some pen to paper sketching to get the ideas flowing. Once I narrow it down and choose my basic direction, I begin to paint full-colour comps, which are like little thumbnails. In many ways this is the most important stage because I like to work out the composition, values and colours. A solid comp helps to give a great momentum at the beginning of the process because I know how it's going to turn out, just without the detail

3 Collect reference
The colour comp has come together nicely, but before jumping into the details of the painting, I stop at this point and collect all the necessary reference material for this specific design. With this flying creature, I know I want it to feature wings that bring to mind flying insects, such as dragonflies and beetles. I also want to hint at the scale structures of reptiles, or even ancient fish. No matter how well you think you know something, good reference material will always show you something new

4 Separating layers
With a piece like this, where the character is separate from the background and the silhouette of the character is so important, it's helpful to divide the file into some basic layers. As I start sculpting the organic shapes of the creature's anatomy, my painting process will be streamlined if I don't have to worry about retouching the background. In addition, this will enable me to easily adjust the values between foreground and background, helping to create more depth in the scene.

5 Basic clean-up

Before getting to the details, I sculpt the painterly brush strokes of the comp into some clearly defined anatomical forms. This is mostly a general first pass of tightening up the overall detail level of the piece, without getting bogged down in anything specific. I just want to define the edge quality of the body parts, such as the head, arms and wings, before I start creating pieces of the anatomy through a different technique

6 Anatomical details

I step back from the straightforward painting approach I've been using so far. In a separate file, I paint one of the large carapace scales that run down the sides of the creature's body. I apply the structural details on the surface of the scale, including a commemorative '100', as though it's been carved for decoration. I give the scale the organic look of bone by painting in a striated structure and overlaying this with a subtle wood texture that reads as bone.

7 Repeated structural patterns

I drop the finely detailed scale into the piece on its own layer, and using a combination of the Liquify and Transform tools, I duplicate it many times to create a row of scales running the length of its body. It's essential to make sure each scale is in slightly different perspective and lighting from the others, which reinforces the three dimensional quality of the rendering

8 Pattern integration

With all the creature's scales in their right place, I integrate this pattern into the overall piece by erasing, darkening and lightening until it matches the general colours and values of the underpainting. On areas such as the tail, simply dropping the opacity of the scale pattern gives it the appearance of falling back behind atmosphere, which adds to the overall sense of depth.

9 Focal details

It's now time to add detail to some of the primary areas that make up the creature's character, such as the head Through its details, I define the difference between the decorative metal piece that's bolted on over the bone skull plates underneath. At this point, I also defined the arms a bit more and paint out the '100' insignia on the wing. The wing graphic just wasn't working for me, but I'll find another area to add it in

10 Texture overlays

To accentuate the bone structure of the skull plates and the mandibles, I bring in a curved and desaturated wood texture to use as an overlay. After laying out the texture in the direction I want to the grain of the bone to go, I change it to an Overlay layer and reduce its opacity until it gives me the desired realism. I simply drop the texture layer into a Clipping Mask inside the layer of the head to clean up any overlap

11 Anatomical patterns

I want to create the feel of the structure of large-scale insect wings. With a little painting and the Liquify tool, I detail the top left wing to the desired effect. I then copy and paste that wing on to all the other wings, transforming them to the proper size. After just a little adjusting of values, all the wings feel like they're grown of the same structure

12 Mechanical details

With the creature's anatomy almost finished, it's time to paint in the details of the enclosed cockpit that's strapped just behind the creature's head. Although the cockpit is designed to have some organic forms that mirror the creature's anatomy, I focus on making the mechanically formed edges of the object feel just a little bit harder and more hand-made than the rest of the creature's rendering.

13 Reflected glow

To bring out the direction of the main light source, and to draw the eye to focal points of the design, I pump up the glow that's reflecting off the creature's head and the canopy of the cockpit. Hot spots like these also start to bring out the depth in the overall lighting and help to tie the layers together
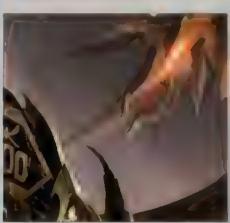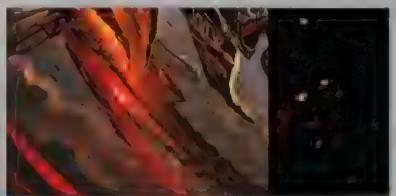
14 Graphic designs

I now focus on the insignias that give the creature the feel of being part of an air force. I refine the symbol to give it the nice, hard edges of a designed graphic and then give the paint some chips and scratches to really attach it to the creature. I also duplicate a version of the insignia on to the mandible to enhance the military feel

15 Background character

In the background, I repaint the secondary creature that's flying past with just enough detail to define its form, but not enough to compete with the primary creature for attention of the viewer's eye. Furthermore, the looseness of the rendering gives the impression of movement through a sense of motion blur.

16 Particles in motion

To build on this sense of movement, I bring in sparks and bits of debris that are shedding from the creature as it flies. I create this effect by taking a clipping of a star field and flattening it to look like sparks, then change it to a Screen layer. These tiny particles have a directional quality that adds a palpable sense of velocity and drama.

17 Energy in motion

Another sweetener that helps with the sense of motion is streaks of flowing energy. Much like the use of the star field, I bring in an image of wispy smoke and punch up its colour saturation before switching it to a Screen layer. The effect is to add subtle structure and detail to the energy that's emitting from within the creature.

18 A light source from within

The final step is to refine the rendering of the fiery light glowing from within the creature. I want to create the impression of rock cracking to reveal the red-hot lava beneath. With this final stage, the colour and heat of the image is all tied together to complete its sense of drama.

PRACTISE YOUR MANGA COLOURING

Manga meets Art Nouveau in Genzoman's striking composition. If you want to see how the art master tackles colouring and lighting, read on!

For this workshop I want to paint something that's not a straightforward fantasy image, but rather a commemorative poster. I want the viewer to be reminded of the Art Nouveau movement, without the scene becoming a pastiche of that distinctive period. I also intend to play with the ideas of composition, texture and contrast.

Some experts believe that when an image is reduced to a thumbnail, or when you see it from a distance, such as on a billboard at the end of the road, it has about three seconds to grab the viewer's eye. So artists have to ensure that their art is easy to 'read', and that the viewer is able to quickly identify focal points through basic shapes, contrast and colours.

A successful image will pass this three-second test and entice the viewer into giving it a second reading. However, if the image is overcomplicated, or if there isn't clear contrast between visual elements

such as colour, structure and shape, then your message is going to be one of confusion and the viewer will move on

Every artist's mission is to think about the elements that make up an image, and to contrast between them harmoniously. I'll reveal how I achieve this while painting this poster, which celebrates the 100th issue of ImagineFX. My art will use manga as a starting point, but also incorporate fantasy and magic – just like the best issues of ImagineFX!

Artist PROFILE
Genzoman
COUNTRY: Chile.

Gonzalo Ordóñez Arias...

1 Start sketching

Once I decide on the canvas size, I create a loose sketch. My approach is to visualise as many possible directions for the image as possible, before going on to the final drawing. Unlike my usual paintings, I'm keen to add a range of decorative elements that are inspired by Art Nouveau. The idea is not to completely emulate the art movement, but to remind the viewer of it.

2 Begin inking the sketch

I copy the layer and set my initial image as the base. Then I start inking on the new layer. I work with very fine lines that don't exceed five pixels in size, and use the default brush with Shape Dynamics turned on. To create strong areas of contrast I darken areas in shadow that I know won't change much in colour. I'm not particularly worried about my line work, because I'm just using it as a base that I'll paint over later on in the painting process

3 Time for colour

I select the area outside the image using the Magic Wand, then invert the selection and change some areas to greyscale. Next, I add colour using two skin tones, which introduces a degree of contrast in the scene. After this I create a new layer exclusively for colour, and use the Paint Bucket tool to darken the area of the sketch, which establishes a base and contrast, and will enable me to colour in the character later
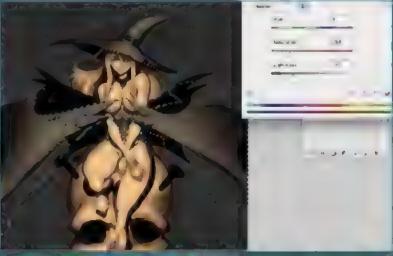
4 Drawing the light

Once I've defined the light direction, I draw the outline of flat areas of light, marking separate volumes rather than setting them as all luminous. Animators use a similar technique. I'm not trying to be especially neat at this point, because I'll be blending these areas later on.

5 Introducing mid-tones

I paint with the colour that I use for light on a new layer. It's now a flat area that amalgamates all separate volumes and unifies my work so far. This layer acts as a half-tone and gives the image a similar look to 90s anime, which usually has three colour levels. A separate layer enables me to adjust opacity, which suggest a range of possible atmospheric moods.

6 Blending with the Smudge tool

Once I decide on the light I merge my layers. I use the Smudge tool to blend, and choose a textured brush at 90 per cent Strength, with Other Dynamics>Pen Pressure activated. I apply my usual hatching technique: first in one direction and then another, to soften the character. I also paint details that help to introduce more volumes, such as the outlines of elements or details on the wings.

PRO SECRETS

Don't forget the stylus!

Many people don't use the configurable button on their stylus. If you're one of them, then I recommend setting it to zoom in and zoom out on the stylus. This helps me achieve a more intuitive workflow. Try it for yourself.

7 Applying gradients and shadows
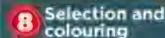
I use the Magic Wand to make selections in the wings, then use the Gradient tool to create the desired volume. This tool enables me to depict wings that are softer-looking than the skin, creating contrast between both textures. With the Lasso tool I add shadows to different areas, and then with the Gradient tool on a Radial setting and in Multiply mode I introduce a shadowy effect from the outside to the centre of the image.

Shortcuts

Hue/Saturation
Ctrl+U (PC)
Cmd+U (Mac)

I use this tool to add colour to a selected area of my monochromatic layer.

8 Selection and colouring

I want to give a reddish hue of varying strength to elements such as the wings, corset and hat. I apply the Hue/Saturation tool (along with the Colorize option) to the base colour, and I use the Color Balance tool to modify warmth in the shadows, mid-tones and highlights. In some cases I duplicate elements and apply different colour variations and opacities, before merging layers (including the ink layer). However, I keep a copy for future selection purposes.

14 Adding texture to the scroll

To create a scroll at the bottom of the image I colour a stone texture, then cut and transform it. I apply Gaussian Blur to give it a slight blur that removes the hardness, resulting in a texture that's similar to paper. I redraw some of the contours using a brush and a sampled white colour. Finally, I create a Multiply layer, place it under the scroll and darken it before transforming it into the parchment's shadow.

11 Depicting the chain

On a new layer I place a dark colour over the chain, neck and hands, then apply Bevel and Emboss to define volume. I add detailing through a new layer and then merge this with the chain's drawing layer. Then I duplicate this layer and create a shadow with it, which I modify to match the shape of the girl's body. I draw textures on the wings with the Smudge tool that give greater weight to these large structures.

9 Painting textures

I draw different textures over this final layer. I add some stitching textures on the hat and corset, giving it the appearance of leather. I draw the lines first with a dark colour and then I sample the same light-coloured area with the Eyedropper Tool, but vary it with a lighter tone to create contrast with the surface. This generates texture and volume. I repeat this technique on the skull's nails, chain and girl's necklace, which were dark, flat masses, but now have detail and texture.

12 Background elements

As a nod to a classic Art Nouveau visual device, I add a prow of an old wooden boat. I give the figurehead more realistic rather than manga proportions, because I want to accentuate the contrast between the girl and the statue. I apply some detailed patterns to emphasise the wooden material, and use the Smudge tool to smooth some of my textures.

15 Create the chess board pattern

I use the same stone texture for some background elements. Using Photoshop's Selection tools I put together a chess board pattern. I then copy this pattern and place it over the texture, before darkening it and using Bevel and Emboss to create a wall or a floor. I merge both layers and use the Color Balance tool to create green cast shadows. A yellow light source reinforces this effect. Applying Edit>Free Transform makes it possible to shape the perspective and adapt its form, which creates a sense of distance, depth and scale.

10 Adding highlights

Placing white lines on a new layer enables me to suggest a secondary light source, and also creates small highlights. I do this on areas such as the nails on the skull and the skull itself, the necklace and the hat. Applying the Smudge tool in a circular motion generates a worn look for surfaces. I also add fine strands to make the hair look lighter. I reduce this layer's Opacity to 85 per cent, which means it blends better with the layers below it.

13 Duplicate the frame

I only have to complete the left side of the frame because I plan to duplicate the layer and apply Edit>Transform>Flip Horizontal. I merge both layers and use the Lasso tool to select different areas such as the wings, which I give a silver tone, and the rest of the statue's body, which gets a warm gold tone. I then darken the edges slightly to accentuate the frame effect.

WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PHOTOSHOP

CUSTOM BRUSHES: BASIC HARD ROUND

It's the basic brush with Other Dynamics and Shape Dynamics turned on. I use it mostly for drawing at inking.

FIRST SMUDGE TOOL 1

Use this brush with the Smudge tool. Its irregularities enable me to soften areas, leaving a softened finish.

MULTIWAY SMUDGE TOOL 2

This brush features irregularities and much more textures, enabling me to simulate a traditional brush look.

19 Introducing text

I tweak it using Color Balance, Levels and Curves. I want to add the Latin phrase 'et tamen stellae' (and yet there are stars) and the number 100. I want to give this text a cast iron appearance, so once it's in place I apply Bevel and Emboss, and blend it into the scroll with the Smudge tool.

16 Painting the environment

To accentuate the feeling of depth, I create a horizon line. Then on a new layer I draw using selections, creating volumes that resemble mountains. I then add elements that unify the environment, such as the sun and stars. Using a selection, I draw stars on the texture, which I then copy and paste on the same layer applying Bevel and Emboss. Adding colour to it creates further contrast in the scene.

Shortcuts
Color Balance
Ctrl B/PC
Cmd B/Mac
This tool helps me to treat the mid-tones, shadows and highlights of an area separately

17 Forming the sun

I make the sun using a round selection that's duplicated several times. I then apply Gaussian Blur with warm tones and on different layer modes, and then add a reflection line in Screen mode to suggest a horizon. Now I create an external glow effect by duplicating the layer and set it to Screen mode. I colour it red and apply Gaussian Blur to complete the effect. The sun complements the details on the girl's hair and wings, and helps to integrate the character with the background.

18 The area from the horizon to the base

I bring in details to this area of the background by putting the pattern into perspective and drawing a few selections on it with the Lasso tool that resemble stalagmites or sharp stones. I introduce volume and texture, and add some stony debris. I use the Smudge tool to further texture the skull, and use small strokes to enhance light integration.

20 Finishing touches

I correct my tones and shadows, giving things a little more detail as well as fixing unpolished elements. I apply Gaussian Blur to the image and then use Edit/Fade so that only the edges are affected. I use the Blur tool in some areas where I want to give the impression of distance, and the image is finished. Happy birthday, ImagineFX!

Procreate

WORKING WITH ALPHA LOCK

Discover how you can use Procreate with a tried-and-tested thumbnailing technique. **Paul Tysall's** digital sketchbook is locked and loaded...

The team behind Procreate clearly understand common digital painting methods. One example is Procreate's custom brush engine. Another feature you can add to the list is Alpha Lock.

Procreate makes it possible to lock the transparent pixels of your target Layer, so any paint you apply to that layer will only appear over existing pixels. If you're already familiar with how Layers work in Photoshop then you'll know that locking transparent pixels has been a common feature for several generations of Adobe's software. It's a great tool and used widely by concept artist when thumbnailing the early stages of character or vehicle designs, starting out with simple silhouettes before adding details to the interior to suggest form. Let's take a closer look...
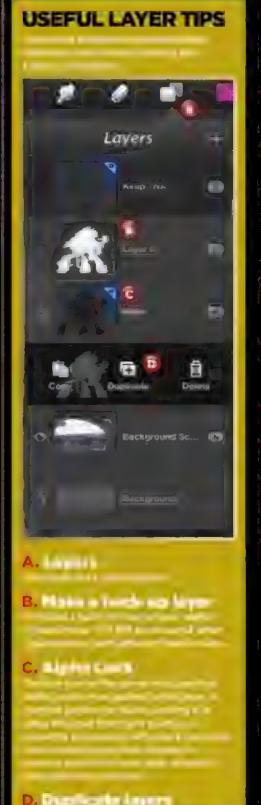
Artist
PROFILE
Paul Tysall

USEFUL LAYER TIPS

A. Layers

B. Make a fresh new layer

C. Alpha Lock

D. Duplicate layers

1 Setting the scene

Start by creating a new canvas at any size and add a background colour. I've taken a background section from a WIP, then scaled it up and cropped it – this gives your silhouettes content, scale and point of view. This process is all about working with values only, so to change your background image to black and white add a layer filled with black and set the Layer Blend mode to Color, then merge them.

2 Random shapes

Select black at 100 per cent Opacity and begin making random marks. Note how your shapes inhabit the composition and regularly alter the brush size so you're going from large forms to details. Attack the edges with an Eraser and Smudge brush. Repeat this process, keeping each design on its own layer – sometimes two separate silhouettes/layers can evolve your designs further – and try not to get attached to one idea.

3 Alpha Lock

Once you're happy with the overall shape, duplicate it (it's handy to hold on to this original for later stages). With your duplicated layer selected tap it to reveal the Layer options popover and select Lock Transparency. A blue icon will appear next to the Layer preview thumbnail, letting you know Alpha Lock is on. Now you can add details to the interior of the shape. Select Unlock Transparency if you wish to modify the overall silhouette.

Photoshop

DESIGN A STRIKING FUTURISTIC FEMALE

Taking a leaf from his successful Last Man Standing book, and with the emphasis on efficiency, **Dan LuVisi** creates a fight-ready character

In this workshop I'll be revealing how I paint a sci-fi female warrior from head to toe. First I should mention that I've been painting since I was about 15. I've learned a lot over the years, especially this year, on how to work through concepts fast and then execute designs for clients quickly.

I'll begin with the rough sketch, and then explain how I progress from concept, through to line art and into the final steps of rendering. This workshop doesn't so much focus on how to nail those rendering details, but rather how to achieve such looks from simple brush strokes or colour placement

I'll be painting a character from the world of my book, Last Man Standing. This means it'll be in a style I'm very familiar with, and will enable me to blend a lot of genres in terms of design and feel The best part about LMS is that you can go crazy with your design and pull in inspiration from fantasy, sci-fi, cyberpunk or even the real world around us.

Throughout the book, as in this workshop, you'll also see how I like to incorporate story elements into the character design. Who are they? Where did they come from? What type of fighter are they? I enjoy adding these small tokens and props to enhance the painting and give it life, rather than produce a bland character with no emotion. These can range from the type of weapons, armour, or overall accessories dotted around the scene. Okay, enough chat from me. Let's go to work

1 Character creation
I try to come up with some type of idea that fits into ImagineFX's 100th issue theme. As you can see, I'm not too creative with my way of incorporating it, but that'll soon change. I want to create a character from the universe of LMS. Someone colourful, fun and unique. And let's be honest, I want to paint a pretty lady. So I began with just a rough sketch. Nothing too detailed – just playing with shapes and composition. I tend not to paint feet a lot, and have been trying not to use that as a crutch, so this time I want to do a full-body reveal
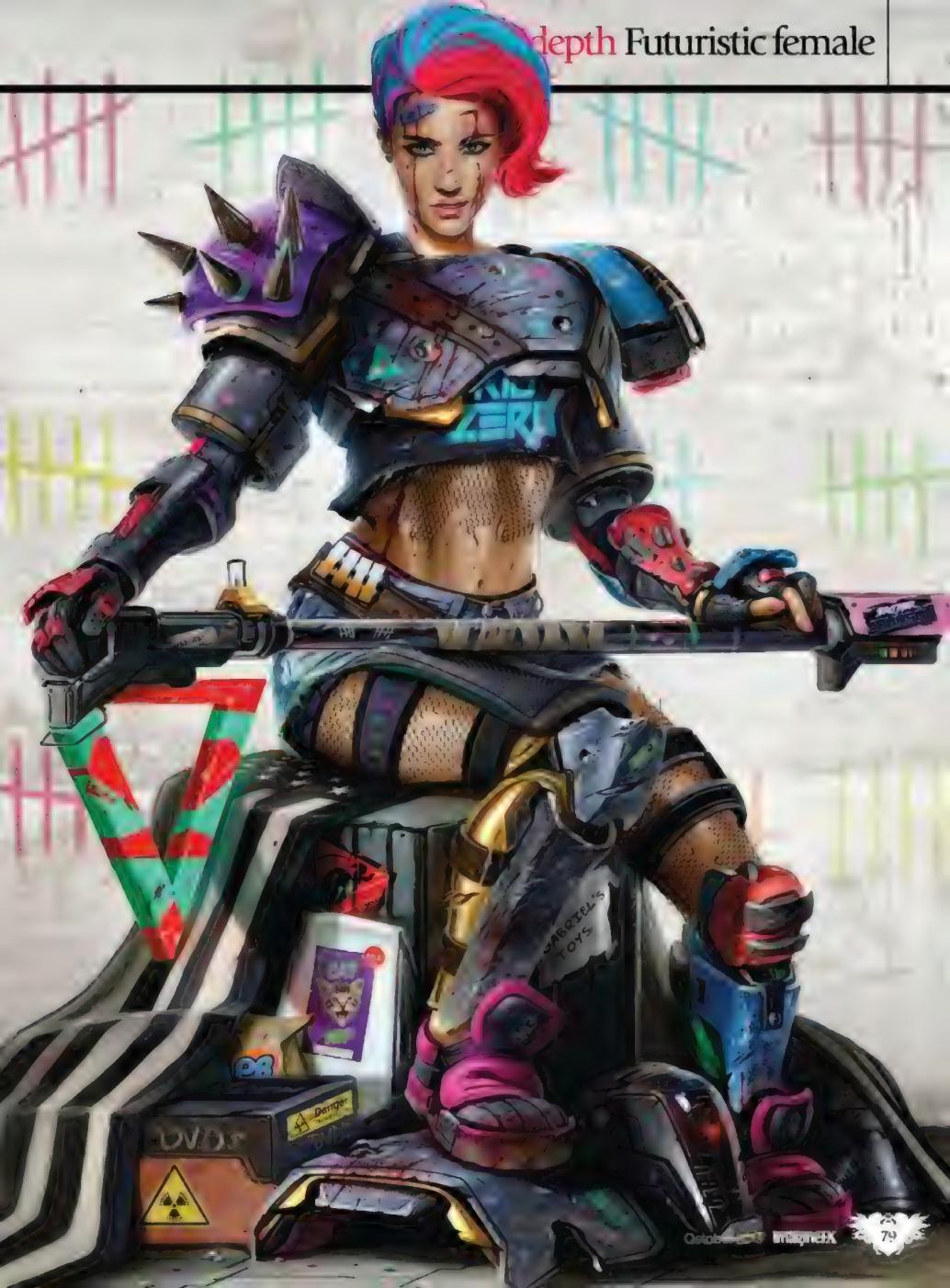
2 Simple background
I don't want the background to be a distraction. So I find a simple photo texture from the free resource site **www.cgtextures.com**. After playing with the hues of it, I slap it down underneath my rough line art. I now have a sense of direction in terms of lighting and colour The texture brings it all together.

3 It's face time
I always tend to get going with the face, whether it's with line art, the colour stage or even when I'm designing the piece. If the face isn't considered to be up to my usual standards, I'll scrap a painting. So using a simple Chalk brush, I begin by just dropping in colours that fit with the overall scheme. ➡➡

Workshops

4 Facial details

Next I begin laying down soft details, such as skin pores and make up. It may look rather like I'm beginning to render here, but I'm not – honestly – because I still want to put in the strong strokes that will help bring her face to life.

5 Just a flesh wound

Once I'm happy with the face, I move on to the dripping blood. I create a new layer on top of the skin and set it to Multiply. I then set my brush to Multiply, which will bring in richer and darker tones once I go over it, creating that thicker-than-water feel of blood. With a Cloud or Dust textured brush I then block in the blotchy dirt marks on the face, and then use a Soft or Chalk eraser to make my sweat marks

6 Armour approach

After drawing my lines for her armour, I create a new layer underneath and start blocking in the colours for her protective gear. If there's a piece of armour that overlaps, such as the grey on gold area, I solve the problem by simply creating a new layer underneath it.

7 Net result

I decide to change the concept and now visualise the ImagineFX 100th issue theme as tally marks. I'm still blocking in my colours, and won't start rendering until I have the majority of the image blocked in. I apply a fishnet texture to the leg and set it to Multiply, so that the image behind it bleeds through. From here, I can play with the Contrast and Levels until it looks natural, and begin to erase chunks out for detailing.

8 Scratch that!

I embark on rendering the armour, throwing in scratches and dents. I don't use any reference or special brushes for this part. Once I have a good feeling for it, sometimes I'll overlay a metal texture on to it to add more grit. I then change the hair – I want something that bounces off the other colours as well. I also feel it makes her face pop a bit more

9 One block at a time

More blocking in of colours. I wish I had more to say about this process, but this is the main eater of time in my art process. Some artists paint with greyscale and colourise. But I treat my paintings like a LEGO set: just work my way down until I have all my pieces, then get going on rendering out one by one

10 Colour and form

I begin to render out the jeans (which I use a texture for), the boots and shin-guards, and her right arm gauntlet All the rendering is still very rough, but because it's at such a high-resolution it all comes together when I zoom out. So don't feel you have to do photorealistic art at such insane lengths. It's not necessary Instead, it's all about colour and form. Wish I'd learned this years ago!

11 It's all in the render

Of course, I understand how a work in progress can change drastically, but when I get stuck into a painting, I simply forget about time and just paint until my hand and wrist hurts. But this is essentially the same process as before. It's very basic, just like painting with traditional media. I start with a rough sketch, move on to line art, lay down my tones and then render. I spend a lot of time rendering because it enables me to focus on the pristine details. It's not for everyone – some prefer a looser style – but I feel this is my way of telling stories in an image.

12 Final thoughts

After rendering, detailing and painting until my eyes bleed, I finally call this painting done. A lot of people ask what custom brushes I use, or any filters or settings, and I can't really say I use any of that. It's just about patience and following through, really. Try to find new and exciting avenues to take while painting, so each new piece enables you to spice up your process. I hope you've enjoyed my workshop!

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Next month in...

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX

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Explore a galaxy of beautiful art and delve into Space Opera!

Thom Tenery paints
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www.thomlab.com

Inspiring advice

Design an alien with a history
Keith Thompson reveals how to create a believable creature using Photoshop.

The fine details of character art
Devon Candy-Lee is inspired by Dune to design a space princess with personality.

Painter X3 masterclass
Learn new brush skills as Peter Stapleton explores Corel's latest software release.

Create art that shocks
Uncover the secrets to painting unique horror art, with Lauren K Cannon.

ISSUE 101 ON SALE 13 SEPTEMBER 2013

Photoshop

BRING NEW LIFE TO A CLASSIC FIGURE

Marta Dahlig passes on her composition, design and rendering skills to help you paint a fantasy character, featuring an unusual colour palette

Artist PROFILE
Marta Dahlig

WORKSHOP BRUSHES

Women in a fantasy setting are a tough subject to tackle. We've seen countless such portraits, and it's nearly impossible to make your image stand out from what's already been done before. And within this already popular subject, nymphs and faeries are among the most often depicted characters. So it's always a challenge to approach this subject and totally involve myself, while still giving the image that classic fantasy feel.

The purpose of this workshop is to show you how I approach this subject: the formation of my ideas and their later development. I'll take you through the whole creative process behind the painting, from initial composition through to the rendering of particular elements. I hope that reading about my art 'battles' will give you some insight and the inspiration for approaching your own paintings and handling classic subjects in unconventional ways.

I work solely in Photoshop with a few basic custom brushes, which I've included here. Due to the limited magazine space, there are several subjects that I won't be able to cover here. However, the audio commentary on the video should cover all other aspects of my work process. So if you're interested in how a particular element has been painted from start to finish, please check the accompanying workshop material. Right, it's time to get painting my water nymph

1 Coloured thumbnails
Aside from painting a nymph, the goal of this image is to hide a '100' somewhere in the scene to honour ImagineFX's 100th issue. I start with a few colour sketches to get my ideas flowing; all of them are based on the idea of bold colour choices. I want my palette to be modern, to contrast with a classic fantasy character. Because of the colour contrasts that will be the key feature of my image, I keep the pose very calm and subtle. I like the colours of images one and three, but finally decide that version two will be the most elegant choice – one that will be just modern enough, yet not too daring.

2 General sketch
I put together my colour palette in the upper right-hand corner of the canvas, basing it on the second sketch. I then put some basic shapes of my water nymph down, which ensures that the main proportions and colours are in place correctly. For this stage, I use my simple Ragged Round Brush for all the strokes, while defining shapes using my Ragged Round Brush. At this point, I decide to hide the '100' within the background and create an optical illusion for the viewer's benefit. I want something that's not easy to see, but once noticed, it can't be unseen.

7 A touch of glamour

I paint the eyelashes using a small sized Airbrush and deepen the shadows of the upper and lower eyelids. I also add a bit of gloss to the lips with an Airbrush. Finally, I run over the bottom part of the eyeball with a light grey Airbrush on low opacity. Dimming the nymph's eyes like this makes her stare even more unsettling.

3 Defining shapes and background

The idea for my character is to leave her unnaturally white in contrast to the dark background. That's why I'm using very light colours for the mid-tones and shadows. I want my nymph to radiate! I'm using the same Ragged Round brush, on a slightly lower Opacity (up to 50 per cent with 100 per cent Flow). I paint the basic folds of the dress and hint at wet creases to gain a general idea of how things are going to look. During this phase I also use the Median filter on top of the background and character sketch layers, to produce a quick smooth transition that will serve as a base for subsequent stages.

4 Softening it up

When the main mid-tones are blocked and smoothed out with the filter, I pick an Airbrush and smooth the transitions by hand. For this, I use the Airbrush and Ragged Brush alternately. I also enrich the palette by playing with the shades that I defined in the palette. I use the Eyedropper tool to select them and then switch hues and saturation slightly, adding some pink and orange hints to the skin. The point is not to have any visible transitions between strokes, which would flatten the feeling of the body (see my red versus green arrows).

5 Facial features

I want the face of my nymph to be soft and subtle, in contrast to the mood of the image. Now I use the Ragged Brush and Airbrush simultaneously. I apply my Airbrush strokes with great care, using a lower opacity than with the Ragged Brush (between 25 and 30 per cent). I'll portray the lips using an unnatural colour, to add a modern touch to the stylised image.

6 Smooth and silky skin

The further I go with polishing, the more Airbrush I use versus the Ragged Round. While the Ragged Round is great for blocking in shapes, I've grown to like the Airbrush. A couple of years ago I was against using the tool, but when applied with care it produces subtle results. I use the Eyedropper to pick colours as I go on and apply transparent (up to 15 per cent Opacity) strokes with my Airbrush over the cheeks, eyebrows and orbits. The touch of pink to the cheeks makes my nymph seem more innocent, and creates even more contrast with her surroundings.

8 Dry and wet clothing

To paint the dress, I differentiate the wet and dry areas. Painting dry cloth is relatively easy. However, when painting wet cloth, remember that it's not painted as a material at all. It sticks to the body, and therefore the usual folding and light interaction rules don't apply. The biggest difference is that folds are much denser and their shadows are bolder and more intense than those of dry folds. As such, the lower area of the dress is darker. The folds over the thigh, on the other hand, instead of running down the thigh, stick to it and form small bulges.
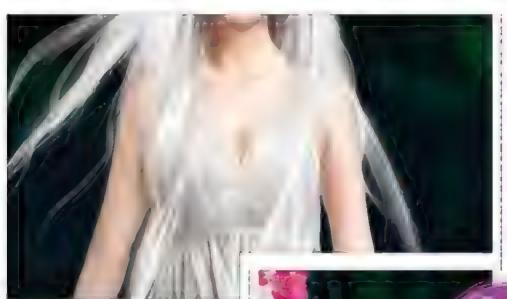

9 Texturing hair

My trick for this process is to use 'unsuitable' hues – beige, pink and blue to complement the greyish hair mid tone. I paint wider and darker strokes with an Airbrush and gradually reduce the diameter and lighten the colour as I proceed. If individual hair strands become obvious, I run over the area with an Airbrush to smoothen things down.

10 Hint at dress details

My approach towards drawing is that it's a choice between what you have to draw in detail and what you can hint at. For example, the focal point is the nymph's face and flowers in her hair, so these are the areas that I paint in most detail. This leaves me just barely hinting at the lace detailing of the bust area. I take my Ragged Round brush and draw general patterns over the bust area and later add some lighter-coloured blobs to simulate light playing off of those details

11 Flowers in her hair

As I mentioned, I want the floral headpiece to be the focal element of the image – both due to its bold colour, as well as the level of detail. I dig up some reference of various flowers and loosely paint in different kinds of flowers and petals over the character's head.

12 Flower power!

Flowers prove a hard element to crack. If I polish them too much, the bold colour will make it look as if I've them copied and pasted them on top of the nymph. To soften this negative effect, I don't concentrate on depicting every flower with great care. The realism will come from the abundance of elements, rather than their detailed portrayal

13 A loose background

The background is another element that I want to only hint at. So I don't use any texturing brushes and work at a 50 per cent, rather than 100 per cent zoom. First I paint in the major shapes and colour blobs of the background. Then I paint smaller blobs of colour with the Ragged Round and Airbrush to hint at whole clumps of leaves. As with the process of painting hair, I gradually lower the brush diameter and lighten the colour of my blobs, so that in the end I underline the edges of a few particular leaves with bright green

14 Painting water
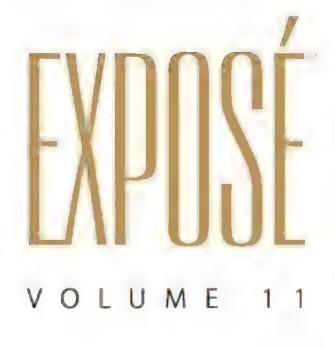
I finish the shape of the '100' in the background trees, and add turquoise and green leaves around it, so that the shape is more recognisable. For painting water I use a higher opacity (50-60 per cent) Airbrush. I paint ripples with dark blues, and wherever the water reflects the colours of submerged objects I incorporate this colour using low opacity strokes

15 Storytelling elements

To boost the narrative of my painting, I add hands coming out of the water that reach for the flowers that fall off the nymph's headpiece. I also decide to hide another '100' within the piece this will be formed by two of those hands, just behind the nymph. I do some posing in front of a mirror, to see which hand positions work best. I don't really bother with much detailing, such as painting fingernails or wrinkles, because I don't want those hands to receive too much attention

16 Finishing up

I flip the image horizontally to check whether everything is in order (your brain can sometimes trick you!). I also copy the character layer and I apply Motion Blur to the one on top. After that, I play with the blurred layer's opacity, so the character seems even more ethereal, with the edges of the nymph's flesh being unclear, but still not too blurred. Afterwards, I airbrush in a pink glow behind the headpiece and a shadow at the bottom of the image to strengthen the focus on the upper part of the painting, so the details at the bottom don't take any attention away from the face and headpiece. And I'm done!

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART
ImagineFX
Reviews

The latest digital art resources are put to the test by the ImagineFX team…

10 PRODUCTS ON TEST

SOFTWARE
90 Painter X3
Corel is trying to entice disgruntled Photoshop users, with new features.

SOFTWARE
92 Xara Photo & Graphic Designer 9
Vector drawing for less than the price of a meal out for two?

HARDWARE
92 Sony Vaio Duo 13
Is it a laptop? Is it a tablet? More importantly, is it any good?

TRAINING
93 Mechanical Character Design
Robots are ubiquitous, which makes them harder to do well. Concept artist Joe Peterson reveals his techniques for making them feel part of your sci-fi world.

BOOKS
94 New reads
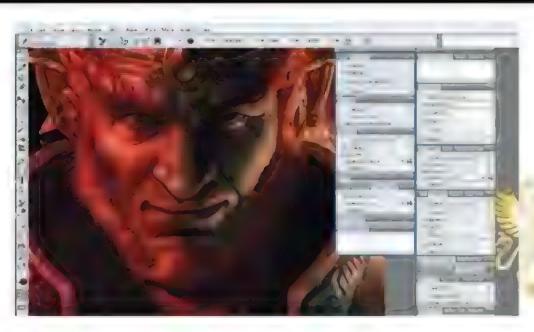EXPOSÉ 11; Corpus Delicti; Pacific Rim: Man, Machines and Monsters; Arctic Rising; Fiend; The Thousand Names.

RATINGS EXPLAINED 🖌🖌🖌🖌🖌 Magnificent 🖌🖌🖌🖌 Good 🖌🖌🖌 Ordinary 🖌🖌 Poor 🖌 Atrocious

Painter's enhanced brush controls means that you can customise how your paint appears on the digital canvas to the nth degree, as seen here in Rising Star's Dudu Torres' painting.
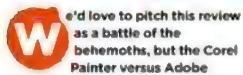
Painter X3

ROLE REVERSAL Corel is trying to entice disgruntled Photoshop users with some inspired new features

Price £310 **Company** Corel **Web** www.corel.com **Contact** 0800 376 9272

We'd love to pitch this review as a battle of the behemoths, but the Corel Painter versus Adobe Photoshop clash doesn't really exist. They're designed to do different things. Painter has always been about painting (surprise!), whereas Photoshop's image manipulation has evolved into the industry-standard for creating artwork.

Where the waters become muddy is in Adobe's controversial Creative Cloud. So whereas Photoshop costs a minimum of £17.58 a month, for £310.80 (or US $429) you get a

Flow maps were an update to Painter 12, but you may have missed them. Use watercolours and the paint will settle as the virtual paper becomes soaked, complete with an impressive little real-time animation as the paint pools and dries. It sounds gimmicky but it's a nifty effect and you can tweak it with custom maps and adjustments.

Corel has also taken a leaf out of relative newcomer Manga Studio's book with the latter's perspective guides. Painter's non-printing lines work in all three dimensions, and they can be used for technical work as well as producing landscape art.

66 With a slew of meaningful additions, Corel is banking on this being enough to tempt Photoshop users 99

complete version of Painter X3. After 18 months you'll have paid roughly the same for both pieces of software – but Painter is yours to keep. With a slew of meaningful additions to X3, Corel is banking on this being enough to tempt Photoshop users into the Painter fold.

Painter X3 contains a lot of paint. It still does an immaculate job of emulating the sticky stuff, from the gelatinous ooze of acrylics to the translucent smears of watercolours. The new Universal Jitter option enables you to inject a bit of randomness in brushwork, opacity, grain, size, angle and colour expression. Lines become more fibrous and dots are spidery.

And there's promising future additions. Leap Motion will work with it in a forthcoming update. This tiny box senses your hand movements, Kinect style. Back in the now, we're really excited about the Paint Jam sessions that Corel has announced alongside X3's release (though not exclusive to it) in which users can watch pros use the software online in live tutorials.

Photoshop still rules the roost. But with X3, Corel is aiming for future domination, simply by listening to their users and noting their competitor's mistakes. The 'battle' between Photoshop and Painter may be contrived, because Painter X3 is a lot more appealing than Creative Cloud.

DETAILS

Features

System Requirements

Rating

ARTIST INTERVIEW

DON SEEGMILLER

Find out what a pro artist thinks of the 13th version of Painter

How long have you used Painter and what's the main appeal?
Since version one – Fractal Design Painter shipped in a paint can! I used an old CalComp Tablet (you had to put hearing-aid batteries into the pen) with the program. There were none of the features we now take for granted, such as layers. It was very much like just painting on a canvas. It was very cool.

What's been the best improvement to Painter X3?
There have been a lot of under the hood improvements to stability and speed. The most noticeable improvements have been made to the brushes. Things like enhanced brush stroke preview, brush search, universal jitter and advanced brush controls. I create a lot of custom brushes and these increase what I'm able to do. There's also a new three-point perspective grid – that's cool.

Are there any negatives?
There are features I won't use much, but I didn't use them in earlier versions either.

Do you think Painter X3 will benefit from Creative Cloud?
No one I know likes Creative Cloud, including myself. I know a number of very good artists who are going to move away from Photoshop because of it.

If this is a new dawn for Painter users, do you think X3 can fully satisfy rogue Photoshop users?
CS6 may be my last upgrade for a while. Most good artists I know look at both programs as just tools and use whatever suits their needs for a particular project.

What platforms do you use Painter on?
My main computer is a PC. I have a Mac mini that I also use and have Painter on it. I'm currently using a Microsoft Surface Pro running Windows. I'll load Painter on the Surface and see how it goes.

Don is a painter who also teaches and writes about art. You can see more of his work at his website.
www.seegmillerart.blogspot.com

Unfortunately there's little middle-ground between the Vaio's tablet and laptop modes - the screen is a bit too floppy to be used at this angle

Sony Vaio Duo 13

LAP DANCE Is it a laptop? Is it a tablet? Is it any good?

Price £1,499 **Company** Sony **Web** www.sony.co.uk **Contact** 020 7365 2413

At first glance, you'd be forgiven for thinking Sony's Vaio Duo 13 is a huge Windows 8 tablet. However, it packs a rather neat little trick up its sleeve: lift the back of the screen and it smoothly slides up and back, revealing a laptop-style keyboard and trackpad. It straddles the middle ground between tablet and laptop, but it still meets Intel's Ultrabook laptop specifications.

When it's in tablet mode, it's definitely the Windows 8 device we've been waiting for. It's capable of running Photoshop, Illustrator and Painter while staying nicely portable. It doesn't make it feel like you're carrying a breeze block in your bag, and it's perfect for indulging in some digital plein air painting.

Sony includes a pressure-sensitive Digitizer pen with the machine, which undoes the many frustrations we've had with our chubby digits in Photoshop. It's comfortable to hold while accurately responding to strokes, and there are a couple of buttons that also function as mouse buttons when you're out of Photoshop.

Where the Duo 13 falls down a little is when you switch it to laptop mode. The keyboard is on the cramped side, and the touchpad is a mere sliver beneath the spacebar. That said, it's preferable to using Windows 8's onscreen keyboard, and fine for writing short emails or comic book captions.

Within, Sony has included Intel's latest Haswell processor, which is powerful but efficient - the eight hours of use we got on a full charge is testament to how well optimised it is. The price is a little too steep for our liking: our review unit cost £1,500 but it feels like it should be £500 less. It may not be great for writers, but for artists it's an amazing piece of kit.

The Vaio comes in the two colours you can see here, or you can order it in a fetching shade of red.

DETAILS

The Vaio may look sleek from the front, but from the back it looks like a Transformer's nightmare.

Vector graphics tend to have a particularly defined look, but artists can exploit this

Xara Photo & Graphic Designer 9

V FOR VECTOR Vector drawing for less than the price of a meal for two?

Price £60
Company Xara
Web www.xara.com
Contact +44 1442 350000

RATING ⚜⚜⚜

We're always wary of software that promises to do lots for a suspiciously low price, and Xara's Photo & Graphic Designer 9 raised our eyebrows. It touts itself as an all-in-one replacement for vector drawing programs such as Corel Draw and Adobe Illustrator, with photo-editing features thrown in.

Vector editing - its raison d'etre - is fluid, and adding or editing nodes is simply a question of double-clicking. A 'Line gallery' includes interesting patterns such as chains. But the best thing is support for Google Fonts, an online repository of free typefaces. Vector editing is a great way to create custom lettering. Photo-editing is a let-down though, with few tools and options, but there's a useful option to convert photos into bitmap traces that can then be edited as vector graphics.
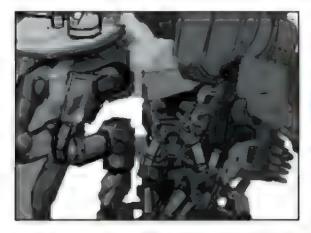
Photo & Graphic Designer 9 is never going to match its high-end competitors, but it's decent enough. The software's uncluttered interface and simple operation make it ideal for beginners.

The ability to turn photos and pics into editable vector graphics is not to be overlooked.
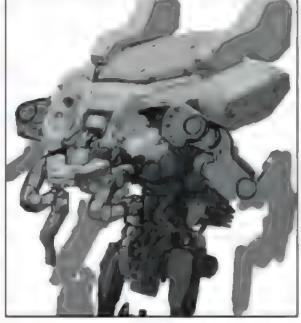
In Mechanical Character Design, Joe renders a robot from scratch.

In the early stages, different shades of grey help the artist select each of the key areas

Mechanical Character Design

REALISTIC ROBOTS Concept artist Joe Peterson reveals
how to make imaginary robots feel part of your sci-fi world

Robots are an enduringly popular element in SF art, but their ubiquity makes it that much harder to get them right. Just like the anatomy of a human figure, anyone looking at your robot will have a sense of whether or not it feels correct, based on the design decisions you make and your ability to make your robot seem part of the world you've created.

Joe Peterson's mission in this three-hours-plus video is simply to help you create more convincing robots. You'll follow him make a SWAT-type assault bot, from initial sketch through to finished concept art. Early chapters focus on broad and then specific design decisions, with later stages switching to finishing techniques.

As Joe walks you through each phase, an interesting relationship between realism and imagination emerges. Unless you've studied engineering, for example, you probably can't create a complex robot design

that someone could manufacture and assemble. But, suggests Joe, you can use your understanding of human anatomy to depict convincing mechanical structures: simply substitute pistons for tendons, ball bearings for joints, and so on.

Joe also imagines situations the robot could be deployed in as he does the initial design work, and talks to a policing friend to establish appropriate colour and scale. The result is a fictional robot that feels as though it could exist.

Joe's multi-disciplinary approach is equally compelling. He brings in ideas such as ambient occlusion from 3D graphics and box lighting from industrial design to build up a solid robot form, where planes are shadows are convincingly rendered.

Aside from the tips and techniques that he offers, Joe should inspire you to look beyond your own creative field and learn from creative people in every field.

ARTIST PROFILE
JOE PETERSON

Joe is a senior concept artist at Blizzard Entertainment, and has gained nine years' experience in this competitive field. For most of that time he has worked in the Blizzard Cinematics department, contributing to various character, set and hardware designs for the titles' in-game and promotional animations. Prior to Blizzard, Joe worked at Red 5 Studios during the early stages of its online shooter project Firefall, where he helped develop a visual style for the game's sci-fi look.

www.armped.net

EXPOSÉ 11

BIGGER AND BETTER Our favourite digital art compendium
returns for the 11th time – and it's better than ever

Co-editors Paul Hellard and Mark Thomas **Publisher** Ballistic Publishing **Price** $69 **Web** www.ballisticpublishing.com **Available** Now

It feels like only yesterday that we asked where the next issue of Ballistic's amazing art compendium would find all its art, such was the richness and variety in EXPOSÉ 10. But, again, Ballistic has scoured the world of digital art to put together another annual and it's nothing short of amazing. Even better, dare we say it, than the last instalment.

Traditional fantasy artist Roger Dean – who created levitating islands for the likes of prog rockers Yes long before Avatar was a twinkle in James Cameron's eye – has been chosen as
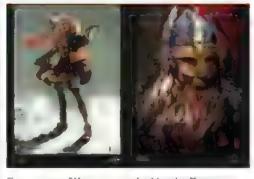

EXPOSÉ 11 has contributions from Roger Dean, Daniele Scerra, Fabien Weibel, Dave Seeley, Shaddy Safadi, ImagineFX cover artist Aleksi Briclot and many more

this issue's Grand Master, and his biography makes for fascinating reading. Roger notes that his game covers for the Psygnosis titles in the early 90s had a certain amount of artistic licence applied because games were then an amorphous and abstract medium. How times have changed.

Hyper-real game art makes up one of EXPOSÉ's 24 chapters, and it's nice to see recent ImagineFX cover artist Aleksi Briclot receive a nod for his illustration of Remember Me's Nilin. As with other EXPOSÉ editions, a handful of pieces are picked to receive Excellence and Master awards, which are judged by a panel of industry experts. In the gaming category it's Daniele Scerra, Gabriel Vernon and Dong Yu who pick up awards.

That's the tip of the iceberg though. There's so much quality art it's hard to know where to begin. Landscapes are as ever the most breathtaking, such as Fabien Weibel's future bayou Home and Christian Hecker's utopic cityscape Room with a view. Highlights of science-fiction and fantasy sections offer Dave Seeley's tubular spacecity The Unincorporated Future and Kerem Beyit's nightmarish invasion. It's also

Every page of the renowned art book offers a surprise – it's well worth the cover price

nice to see digital plein air get a special feature, with outdoor art champ Shaddy Safadi contributing an essay.

However, the joy of EXPOSÉ lies in the side lines, in the smaller images you discover while casually thumbing through. Every page offers a surprise, and you're sure to find something you like – we're particularly fond of Patrick Eischen's LEGO take on Charles C Ebbets' classic vertiginous photograph of New York workers sitting on a girder.

The fact that you'll go from cover to cover at least three times makes it more than worth the asking price and, as ever, it's a fascinating time capsule of trends and themes in digital art.

RATING ☆☆☆☆☆

Corpus Delicti

MODEL COLLECTION A book of Serge Birault's inimitable paintings shows his skill and his surprisingly archaic process

Author Serge Birault **Publisher** CFSL Ink **Price** £30 **Web** www.cfsl-ink.com **Available** Now

French artist and ImagineFX contributor Serge Birault's portrait work sits somewhere at the more accessible end of the uncanny valley. His femmes exhibit cartoonish, Betty Boop-like proportions, but their skin tones and eyes look real. It's an odd juxtaposition, yet it works – among the many images of fantasy females out there, Serge's art is instantly identifiable.

Corpus Delicti – which translates from French as "body of crime" – comprises many of Serge's favourite images over the years, and they usually include an improbably curvaceous model wearing tight Lycra while either fondling or trying to kill a gloopy-looking cephalopod.

Variation isn't really the order of the day here, but Serge's intensely detailed and wonderfully emotive images are never less than fascinating to witness on the page.

The book concludes with a tutorial that reveals Serge's approach to creating his masterpieces and, in essence, it's layers and airbrush all the way. Sometimes he creates up to 1,000 layers, and works in minute detail with a low-opacity airbrush.

Serge readily admits that his method is a little archaic, but when the results are this good it's hard – if not impossible – to find any real fault with his chosen technique.

Cupcake anyone? Serge's paintings invariably include a curvy lady and a cephalopod.

RATING ★★★★★

Pacific Rim: Man, Machines and Monsters

PACIFICALLY SPEAKING The Making Of book for Guillermo del Toro's robot and monster-brawling film

Author David S Cohen **Publisher** Titan Books **Price** £30 **Web** www.titanbooks.com **Available** Now

Guillermo del Toro is one of the few directors able to go from big-budget schlock such as Hellboy and Blade 2 to more intimate projects such as The Devil's Backbone and Pan's Labyrinth. And for that, he should be applauded.

After an absence of five years, Pacific Rim marks Guillermo's triumphantly anarchic return to the big screen. Essentially it's a film about giant robots smacking seven shades out of giant monsters.

David S Cohen's authoritative Making Of book covers the film from its original inception by Guillermo and screenwriter Travis Beacham to the finished 3D product. There are pages from Guillermo's notebook, character concept art, leviathans, robots and shots from the film.

It's clear Guillermo hasn't let a big budget get in the way of his thematic and visual obsessions: the monsters look like giant versions of the inhabitants of Pan's Labyrinth and a human story glues it all together.

The book's peppered with pull-outs, stickers and blueprints, which makes it ideal for monster-obsessed kids, too.

Guillermo hasn't let big budgets get in the way of his thematic and visual obsessions.

RATING ★★★★

Caption: It's a big, bad and very brave wolf who messes with this defiant Red Riding Hood.

Chekydot Studio

HOW CHEKY The artists at Chekydot aim to blend creative approaches from both the East and West

Well away from the traffic and pollution of the capital Jakarta, the Indonesian city of Malang in East Java affords a wonderful view of the placid Mount Arjuna. It's also home to Chekydot Studio, a group of artists who create colourful character pieces for a range of applications – from trading card games to comics, and cover illustrations to concept art.

For studio founder Admira Wijaya, the city may be a little out of the way, but the calm atmosphere is part of the charm. "This location is not too rushed and stressful," he says. "Furthermore, it still has fresh air."

However, there's more to Chekydot's brand of inspiration than being close to nature. First of all, it has Admira's creative experience behind it. Also known as Garang76, he's been illustrating professionally since 2001 and has become one of Indonesia's top fantasy artists.

For colourist Erlan Arya, being able to work with Wijaya is part of the studio's appeal. "He's not simply an owner, but a fellow illustrator, mentor and good friend," says Arya. "Apart from his drawing techniques, he shows us the world of professional illustration and how to prosper in it."

Chekydot is a place where creatives can go to expand their skills. The studio's founder runs the Admira Concept Design Course. In addition, it has an open door policy. "Everyone gathers here for the same reason – to do what we love the most," Arya continues. "Anyone is welcome to visit, work as interns or apply for a position here. We know a lot about illustration – from pencil art, colouring, character design, comics and even concept art."
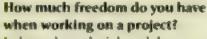
When the creativity just isn't flowing, the artists are free to play console games, watch films or even catch up on sleep in one of the dedicated nap rooms. As long as the

Caption (middle): Chekydot's policy of allowing artists time to relax and get in the right frame of mind before being creative pays off time and time again.

Caption: Admira Wijaya painted this tribute to Metal Gear Revengeance after playing Metal Gear and "to kill boredom during holidays."

SEDHAYU ARDIAN

The painter shares what it's like to work at Chekydot

How much freedom do you have when working on a project?
It depends on the job and the deadline. The longer the deadline, the more freedom I get on a project.

Why would you recommend working in Chekydot?
I have an insatiable desire to learn about the world of illustration, and working here I can gain more experience with each project

How important do you think it is it to work internationally?
It's very important. Every time you work for an overseas company you gain more experience, knowledge, tips and tricks, which can be taught or transmitted to other artists at Chekydot. You learn how others think, the way they communicate and how they interpret briefs from clients and go on to produce extraordinary artwork.

What project are you working on at the moment?
Currently, I'm working on a comic from one of the major publishers in America. The challenge is working within a super-tight schedule

What work are you most proud of, and why?
I'm proud to work with the other artists here at Chekydot. We support each other, share knowledge and experience on any given job and, of course, have a lot of fun. I admire Admira Wijaya, the owner of Chekydot. He always motivates and gives valuable lessons in creating the best work It makes him the art director, a friend and a brother.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to become a concept artist?
Well, I'd say they should practise more and do more observation Brilliant ideas could just pop up from simple things around you Also, try to combine multiple items into a single object, and create innovative new forms.

Sedhayu is a graduate of the Admira Concept Design Course. As well as digital painting, he enjoys listening to jazz music.

www.froiz.deviantart.com

Some more Metal Gear imagery – Sedhayu Ardian painted this with guidance from Admira Wijaya

> **When creativity isn't flowing, artists play games, watch films or take naps**

Chekydot's prestigious clients include Blizzard and Antic Entertainment

needs of their clients are being met, the atmosphere is relaxed and fun. What founder Admira understands is that artists need to be in the right frame of mind to be at their best

Of course, the studio is not without a little friendly competition. "We're always learning and challenging each other," says Arya. "In the right situation, we believe that rivalry can be a catalyst to expanding our skills – pumping motivation to one another"

With clients like Blizzard and Antic Entertainment, much of Chekydot's output is enjoyed by gamers in the West However, the economic downturn has made clients think even harder about the properties they develop. According to Admira Wijaya, they're reluctant to spend money on childish projects. However, there's a move afoot to incorporate more themes and folklore from developing countries, and for this the Indonesian studio is well positioned

"Southeast Asian countries are famous for their unique and exotic folklore," he says. "Mixing Western and Eastern themes in animated shows such as Avatar: The Last Airbender can reap success. It represents elements from around the world in a creative and innovative way"

He continues: "The industry is quite tough, for newbies and for companies that have been around for years. I think we can be considered to be one of the important ones, because we have a different characteristic – we blend East and West."

Website

Experience the new website and get more from your ImagineFX

Watch the latest video tutorials

Follow our pro artists advice as they guide you through their painting processes

Perspective in Painter X3
Android Jones makes the most of the new Perspective Guides: .
www.bit.ly/ifx-painterx3

Paint manga using masks
See how South Korean artist Doo uses masks in his manga art
www.bit.ly/ifx-mangamasks

Compose a complex scene
Mark Molnar breaks an environment down into manageable sections
www.bit.ly/ifx92-pirates.

Professional tutorials
Learn with our library of tutorials from your favourite artists, including Tom Garden, Mélanie Delon and Marta Dahlig: www.bit.ly/ifx-martabrushes.

News and blogs
Get the latest news and see fantastic art: http://beta.imaginefx.com/tag/blog.

ImagineFX Store
Discounts, deals and access to the Premium section: http://beta.imaginefx.com/shop.
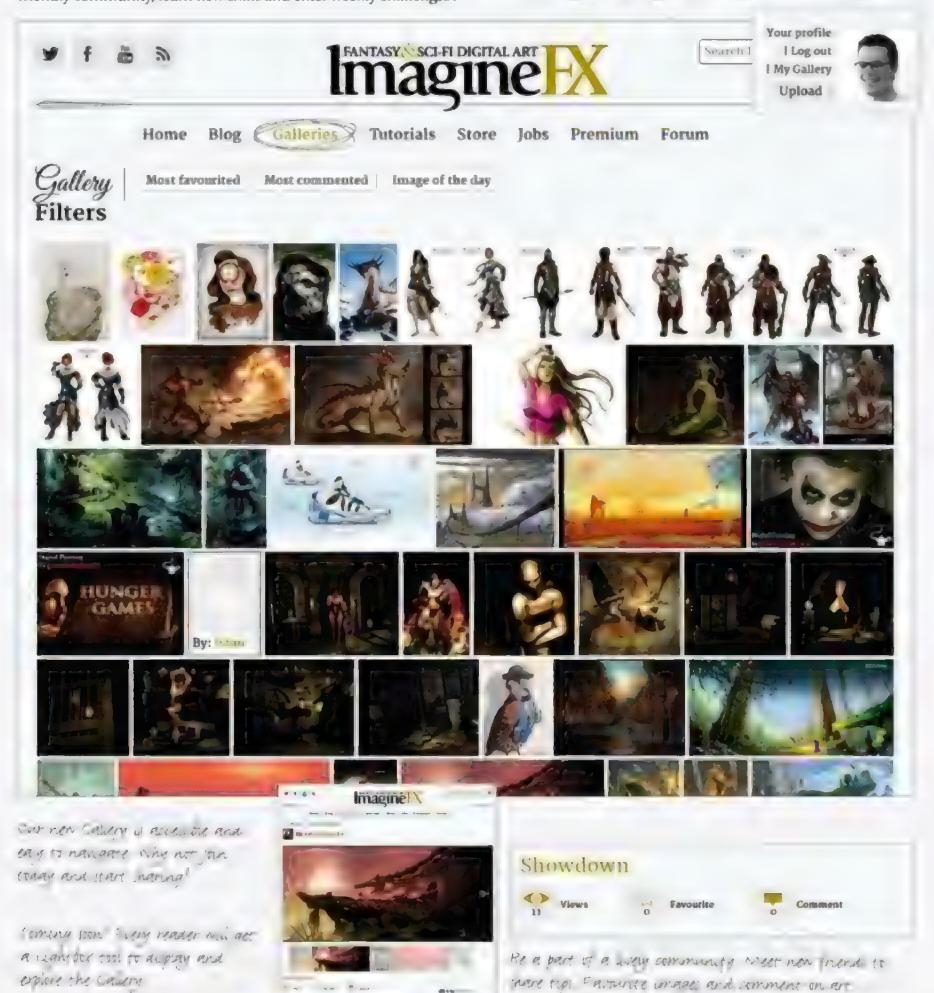
Galleries and community

Uploading your art is easy and quick. Once registered you can join our friendly community, learn new skills and enter weekly challenges .

Will your art be chosen and promoted as 'Image of the Day'?

Set up your personal profile and upload your art instantly

Our new Gallery is accessible and easy to navigate. Why not join today and start sharing!

Coming soon! Every reader will get a lightbox tool to display and explore the Gallery

Be a part of a busy community, meet new friends to share tips. Favourite images and comment on art.

The ImagineFX Vote

100
Favourite
Artists

The 100 most-loved fantasy
artists as voted for by the
readers of ImagineFX

Featuring
Sparth
Bobby Chiu
Michael Kutsche
Frank Frazetta
Genzoman
HR Giger
Brian Froud
Alex Ross
Adam Hughes
Boris Vallejo & Julie Bell

Welcome. . .
to your chosen 100

You've cast your vote. Your voices have been heard, and now we have the definitive list of your favourite artists. This talented group are the ones you turn to for inspiration, the ones whose art is up on your walls, the ones who've helped you to beat the dreaded creative block. I think the rundown has many surprises along the way, but it suitably reflects the different styles of art that regularly feature within the pages of ImagineFX. This is your list. Enjoy…

Claire Howlett, Editor
claire@imaginefx.com

100 Chris Achilléos
Location: England

An artist whose iconic style typified 1980s art, Chris continues to work in film, TV and on book covers. His is a world filled with Amazons, desert battlefields and wild beasts.
www.bit.ly/cachilleos

99 JS Rossbach
Location: France

Jean-Sebastien is just as comfortable painting covers for Marvel comics as labouring over personal projects like his Verdin graphic novel. Recently exhibiting his art to acclaim, he has also shown his work in several art books, including his own Burning Inside.
www.livingrope.free.fr

Why I like…
Lorland Chen

"Along with his preference for brighter colour palettes, I love the intricate costume elements that feature heavily in Lorland's artwork. His attention to the narrative qualities of fabric and detailing are enthralling."
Nicole Henderson Staff Writer

98 Roger Dean
Location: England
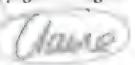
His 70s prog rock album artwork won him fans, but Roger's paintings have a further reach. EXPOSE 11 named him this year's Grand Master, noting that Roger has helped pave the way for incredible invention, technical mastery and creativity in the digital arts industry."
www.rogerdean.com

97 Skan Srisuwan
Location: Thailand

One of the pioneer digital artists in south-east Asia. Skan's relationship with ImagineFX goes back to issue five, when he created the cover. The metallic surfaces in his images were inspired by the Gundam toys of his childhood. He is the founder of Studio Hive.
www.fiduciose.net

96 David Levy
Location: US

French concept artist David has studied his craft in his native country and The Netherlands, and currently lives in West Coast US. As a freelancer, he's worked on blockbuster films and AAA video games, such as Prometheus and the Assassins Creed franchise.
www.vyle-art.com

95 Lorland Chen
Location: China

With his vibrant paintings, Lorland is a master of digital art in his native China. Today he splits his time between freelance work and teaching the new generation of China's digital artists at the Chengdu Academy of Fine Art in Sichuan, south-west China.
www.bit.ly/ifx-lchen

94 Dave Gibbons
Location: England

In 1986 two Brits deconstructed the superhero comic genre for an adult audience, and so created Watchmen. Dave would work with Alan Moore again on Superman title For the Man Who Has Everything, and he also went on to paint and write The Originals in 2004.
www.davegibbons.co.uk

93 Dave Dorman
Location: US

Dave might have made his name in Marvel, DC and Dark Horse comic titles, but it was his 1990s Star Wars art that swelled his ranks of fans. Dave has since won an Eisner Award for his *Aliens: Tribes* paintings and the San Diego Comic-Con Inkpot Award in 2010.
www.davedorman.com

92 Daryl Mandryk
Location: Canada

Spacey sci-fi vehicles may be the first thing that springs to mind when you think of Daryl's artwork, but his blog reveals non-fantasy landscapes and life-paintings too. His clients reflect his range, which includes Warner Bros, Random House and Blur Studios.
www.mandrykart.com

91 Clint Langley
Location: England

Although Clint's name is linked with that of another British comics pioneer, Pat Mills specifically, his work on ABC Warriors and Slaine, he's created Marvel cover art for Guardians of the Galaxy, and several RPGs, collectible cards and book covers.
www.clintlangley.com

90 Fred Gambino
Location: England

As a child, Fred was inspired by British TV series Dr Who and – after a stint working at a grocers – Fred soon started working in the world of sci-fi- and fantasy. Creating a stir with his book cover illustrations, he's gone on to work in film, on The Ant Bully and Escape from Planet Earth.
www.fredgambino.co.uk

Why I like...
Daryl Mandryk
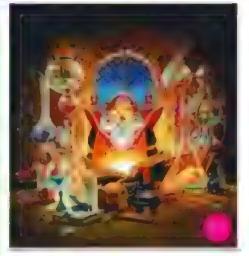
"An artist with absolute control of his medium, Daryl's art never fails to surprise or please. His control of composition and colour is wonderful. Every scene feels like a moment frozen on his canvas."
Ian Dean Associate Editor

89 Jim Burns
Location: England

Jim took his cue not from the masters of sci-fi but from sci-fi comics. He joined the Royal Air Force as soon as he could, but his art talent soon landed him a position in art college 18 months later. He's painted many book covers and worked on Blade Runner.
www.alisoneldred.com

88 Matt Stawicki
Location: US

Perhaps best known for his book cover illustrations, and influenced by US greats like NC Wyeth and Norman Rockwell, Matt made the move from traditional to digital art in the 1990s. Since then he's worked on games, films, books and collectable card games.
www.mattstawicki.com

87 Ian Miller
Location: England

Irreverent, iconoclastic and sometimes just plain bizarre, Ian's art is quintessentially English yet totally otherworldly. After working on animator Ralph Bakshi's Wizards in the 70s, Ian's career blossomed, but he's never lost his scratchy fish-eyed weirdness.
www.ian-miller.org

86 Jeff Easley
Location: US

An oil painter inspired by the great Frank Frazetta, Jeff made his name working on D&D after meeting fellow Kentucky artist Larry Elmore. While still associated with D&D art, he also worked on the budding Magic: The Gathering card company.
www.jeffeasleyart.com

85 JP Targete
Location: US

JP has notce up around 900 book covers, bagging himself the Chesley Award for best paperback book cover in 2000. Taking a turn into the world of concept art, he did a stint as art director at game company NCsoft, and is now a sought-after freelancer.
www.targeteart.com

84 Justin 'Coro' Kaufman
Location: US

He's one of the two co-founders of the Massive Black art studio, but Coro has a distinct style to his fellow concept artists. When he's not on art director duties, he creates comics, exhibits his oil paintings, and flits between portraiture and otherworldly creature art.
www.coro36ink.com

83 Ken Kelly
Location: US

From Creepy comics to KISS and Conan, Ken is a massive name among fantasy painters, yet the humble artist puts it all down to blind luck. In the 1970s he was a regular illustrator of horror comics, then the rock band KISS came a-calling and his distinctive art was exposed to a whole new audience.
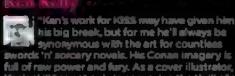**www.bit.ly/ifx-kkelly**

Why I like...
Ken Kelly

"Ken's work for KISS may have given him his big break, but for me he'll always be synonymous with the art for countless swords 'n' sorcery novels. His Conan imagery is full of raw power and fury. As a cover illustrator, Ken's skill lies not only in conveying the thrill of a scene, but also knowing when to stop, letting the reader discover the payoff for themselves."
CSW Hope Operations Editor

82 Stephan Martinière
Location: US

French artist Stephan has created concept art for films such as Star Wars episodes II and III, The Fifth Element and Total Recall. He has art directed in the games industry with titles like Myst and Rage, and has painted an impressive number of book covers.
www.martiniere.com

81 Ryan Church
Location: US

The range of sci-fi movies concept artist Ryan has contributed to is staggering - Star Wars episodes II and III, Star Trek, Avatar... "What an honour to be on ImagineFX's top 100 artists list," he says. "I've been a huge fan of the magazine for a long time."
www.ryanchurch.com

80 Greg Hildebrandt
Location: US

Back in 1977 twin artists Greg and Tim painted the iconic poster that launched Star Wars. Since then it has been joined by a whole gallery of fantasy and pin-up art. Sadly, Tim passed away in 2006, but Greg continues their creative mission to this day.
www.bit.ly/ifx-ghildebrandt

79 Chris Foss
Location: England

Chris's sci-fi spaceship art is instantly recognisable - kaleidoscopic, epic, detailed, and every one captured the awe of outer space. Yet Chris started his career in black and white, illustrating The Joy of Sex. He continues to create amazing art from his studios in Devon and Guernsey Island.
www.chrisfossart.com

78 Alex Horley
Location: US

I'm a big fan of how Imagine-X balances the significance of traditional skills as a strong foundation to apply to today's modern digital formats," says Alex, whose painted artwork has graced everything from Harry Potter to Penthouse Comix.
www.alexhorleyart.com

77 Brian Bolland
Location: England

Synonymous with 2000 AD, Bolland's Judge Dredd Brian led the artists of the British Invasion of the US comic industry in the 1980s. He inked the Alan Moore-penned classic Batman: The Killing Joke, but he is mainly known for his detailed, dynamic covers.
www.brianbolland.net

76 Rodney Matthews
Location: England

Rodney is linked with rock and album covers, Michael Moorcock book covers, or to his fans, is a stone fine artist. He's all of these things, due to his fun art style that masks a knack for painting the moment of most importance of any scene.
www.rodneymatthews.com

75 Drew Struzan
Location: US

It's hard to think of film posters without conjuring up Drew's iconic art. Star Wars and Indiana Jones may be the first titles that spring to mind, but Drew has worked on over 150 movie posters, including Blade Runner, Big Trouble in Little China and Back to the Future.
www.drewstruzan.com

FRANK MILLER'S RONIN

74 Frank Miller
Location: US

While the British Invasion was changing the face of comics in the 80s, Frank helped the US carry their weight, offering fresh visions of three superheroes like Batman: The Dark Knight Returns, the Sin City, and 300 have also been made into successful films.
www.frankmillerink.com

73 Justin Sweet
Location: US

Justin has worked for various game and book publishers, and produced concepts for Disney, National Geographic, Wizards of the Coast, Tor Galaxy, and Wandering Star. He was awarded a gold and silver medal by Spectrum and has worked on The Chronicles of Narnia.
www.justinsweet.com

Why I like...
Justin Sweet

"Justin creates fantasy art that Frazetta would be proud of. Like his predecessor, Justin captures the moment of most importance, a snapshot of a larger, grander event that has or is about to take place. Each and every image is all you want to be looking at."
Daren Horie Digital Editor

72 Dylan Cole
Location: US

After an internship at ILM, Dylan was convinced of the future of digital art and it didn't take him long to move to its higher echelons. As a concept artist and matte painter, he's worked on video games, commercials and films such as The Return of the King and Avatar.
www.dylancolestudio.com

71 Bill Sienkiewicz
Location: US

A comic art innovator and Eisner award-winner who blasted people's minds with his unique style, Bill made his name teaming up with Frank Miller. Soon after he wrote and illustrated Stray Toasters, and has since pencilled 30 Days of Night.
www.billsienkiewiczart.com

70 Raymond Swanland
Location: US

Raymond has created two angular creature covers for us, but the Hawaii-based artist's personal work reveals a softer painting style. With this range, he's created character art for Oddworld and Magic: The Gathering among many others.
www.bit.ly/rswanland

69 Michael Kutsche
Location: US

Michael first came to our attention through his amazing personal work, and his subsequent workshop in issue 75. He has since created art for Alice in Wonderland, John Carter of Mars, Thor and Oz the Great and Powerful. He also keeps busy by exhibiting his art.
www.michaelkutsche.com

68 Simon Bisley
Location: England

Simon launched himself on to the comic scene in the late 1980s at 2000 AD with art for ABC Warriors and Slaine. He went on to work on a range of DC titles, including Hellblazer. "Thrilled to be in the top 100 artists – thanks to everyone who voted for me," he says.
www.simonbisleyart.com
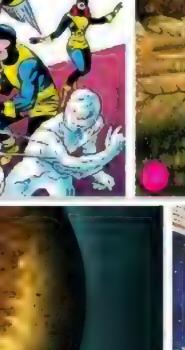
67 Jack Kirby
Location: US

One of the most influential and beloved of all comic artists, Jack has done so much more than help invent Captain America and The Hulk. He was an innovator, uniquely depicting action and suspense, and expanding what was possible in comic art storytelling.
www.kirbymuseum.org

66 Larry Elmore
Location: US

Fresh out of US Army service in the 1970s, it took Larry a few years to get into US fantasy art groove. A bit of freelance finally lead him to the first professional illustrator for the role-playing game Dungeons & Dragons. He's publishing a book of all his art to date.
www.larryelmore.com

65 Aly Fell
Location: England

Previously an animator with Cosgrove Hall in Manchester, Aly reinvented himself as a cover illustrator. "I don't consider myself a fantasy artist as such, but it's wonderful to see myself next to those whose work I so admire and respect," he says.
www.darkrising.co.uk

64 Osamu Tezuka
Location: Japan

Osamu did more than any other artist to popularise Japanese comics and anime. Inspired by Walt Disney, he started publishing manga in the 40s, inventing Astro Boy, and Kimba the White Lion. It's estimated that he created around 700 comics in his lifetime.
www.tezukaosamu.net/en

63 Greg Manchess
Location: US

Greg has painted for Time Magazine and The National Geographic Society. But his love of art and fantasy is never far from his most inspired pieces, whether it's his 2011 calendar or the many brilliant pieces he creates as lecturer at the Illustration Master Class.
www.manchess.com

62 Ralph McQuarrie
Location: US

When Ralph died last year, the tributes were worthy of the man. Artists spoke of the influence he had on them, from his iconic work on the original Star Wars trilogy, his Oscar-winning work on Cocoon and his concept art for E.T. and Battlestar Galactica.
www.bit.ly/ifxrmcquarrie

61 Serge Birault
Location: France

Serge's talent for creating buxom vixens often fighting off gloopy tentacles has seen him become one of the top pin-up artists in fantasy art. The tools he uses to create his imagery gives a whole new meaning to the phrase digital enhancement.
www.sergebirault.fr

60 Jason Chan
Location: US

Death on the wing, fire-spewing beasts and swords of vengeance – these are some of the favourite subjects of this concept artist and illustrator. One of his latest passions, however, is his Zombie Playground project, which proves that you don't need to be old to be undead!
www.jasonchanart.com

Why I like...
Ralph McQuarrie

"I love the work of Ralph – he's truly inspirational! Art that inspired me during childhood continues to spark my imagination in the present day. He remains an artistic legend, Star Wars master and a true role model."
Les Ward, Reader

59 Daniel Dociu
Location: US

Daniel is not just an incredible artist, he's also been a driving force behind the look of Guild Wars. This year he picked up yet another accolade – his artwork Crossroads was one of the Into the Pixel winners, unveiled at E3 earlier this summer.
www.tinfoilgames.com

58 Luis Royo
Location: Spain

Famed for his gothic women that have featured in several art books and Heavy Metal magazine, Luis has a loyal following in and out of his native Spain. In 2009 he published the book Dead Moon in collaboration with Romulo Royo.
www.luisroyo.com

57 Todd McFarlane
Location: US

Spawn creator Todd made his name in the 1980s for his work on Spider-Man. His efforts in founding Image Comics and his introduction of Spawn, helped usher in an age of creator-owned titles in comics.
www.mcfarlane.com

56 Terryl Whitlatch
Location: US

As well as her amazing creature illustrations, Terry is closely associated with Lucasfilm, particularly her work on character work for The Phantom Menace. She teaches and is a fine illustration at Academy of Art University.
www.talesofamalthea.com

55 Aleksi Briclot
Location: France

This award-winning illustrator has painted numerous Magic The Gathering cards and worked on several other fields. He also works as an art director in the computer games industry – a career highlight includes the game Remember Me with Capcom.
www.aneveoni.com

54 Jon Foster
Location: US

Jon graduated from Rhode Island School of Design in 1989 with a BFA in illustration. His works have appeared in publications such as Dark Horse Comics, DC Comics, Tor Books, Simon and Schuster and Harry S Abrams Books. Jon teaches at The Art Department and lectures at various schools around the US.
www.jonfoster.com

Why I like...
Peter Elson

"Until I saw Peter's art, the nine-year-old me thought spaceships only came in boilerplate grey. Suddenly his dynamic, colourful craft were flying out of the pages of my Terran Trade Authority art books and into my imagination. And they've never left."
Cliff Hope Operations Editor

53 Peter Elson
Location: England

A generation of sci-fi artists have been inspired by Peter's work whose colourful illustrations gave the genre an altogether brighter look. "I know he would be proud to know that he has influenced the careers of dozens of people," says sister Pam on his behalf.
www.peterelson.co.uk

52 Katsuhiro Otomo
Location: Japan

Best known as the creator of the Akira manga and the subsequent anime, Katsuhiro is a renowned storyteller. His comic panels exude expression, but it is his detailed mechanical designs and his vision as a writer and artist that have cemented his creative reputation.
www.bit.ly/ifx-kotomo

51 Marko Djurdjevic
Location: Germany

Marko was spotted by ConceptArt.org and hired by Massive Black. As a concept artist he excelled but then Marvel came knocking and Marko left to paint covers for Spider-Man, Avengers, Captain America and more. Marko now runs his own company, Sixmorevodka.
www.sixmorevodka.com

50 Syd Mead
Location: US

Sydney Jay Mead started as a designer for Ford, US Steel and Philips, but became one of the most profound talents in fantasy and sci-fi art. He's worked on Alien, Blade Runner and TRON, and continues to expand his role as visual futurist to this day.
www.sydmead.com

49 Dan Dos Santos
Location: US

Dan's art features ultra-realistic zombie white trash alongside comic fantasy. Dan creates all, painted with an eye for detail and expression. This well-respected traditional artist helped set up the online art resource and information centre Muddy Colors.
www.dandossantos.com

48 Paul Bonner
Location: Denmark

This British fantasy artist has been based in the Danish capital Copenhagen for many years. With its Norse heritage, Scandinavia provides the perfect inspiration for his artwork, which often features trolls, dwarves, ogres, dragons and legendary characters like Beowulf and Grendel.
www.paulbonner.net

47 Hajime Sorayama
Location: Japan

Japanese pin-up artist Sorayama shot to fame in the early 80s with a series of sexually charged robots called Gynoids. As well as personal projects, books and exhibitions, Sorayama has worked for Sony, Create, Lucas, Playboy, Penthouse and Disney.
www.hajimesorayama.com

46 Mélanie Delon
Location: France

An expert in fantasy portraiture artist figurative work, Mélanie's a regular in the pages of ImagineFX, answering reader questions and providing workshops. In addition to commissioned work, she has been building up her own series of fantasy art books.
www.melaniedelon.com

45 James Jean
Location: US

Having won all there is to win in comic art for his DC covers, James branched out into fine art. With successful solo shows behind him and contracts with Prada and Atlantic Records, there are few artists as inspirational as James Jean.
www.jamesjean.com

Why I like...
Mélanie Delon

"Mélanie's characters are so real, yet they're also so fantastical that they can only exist in the mind's eye of this amazing artist. Her ability to deftly get across an emotion has meant she's always top of our list for work in ImagineFX. Her art is sublime."
Claire Howlett Editor

44 Jeff Simpson
Location: Canada

Illustrator and concept artist Jeff is based in Montreal, Quebec. He's currently employed at Ubisoft Montreal as an concept artist, having worked on Assassin's Creed 3 last year. Jeff's unique surreal style and dark overtones have caught the eye of admirers beyond his video game employer.
www.surrealsushi.com
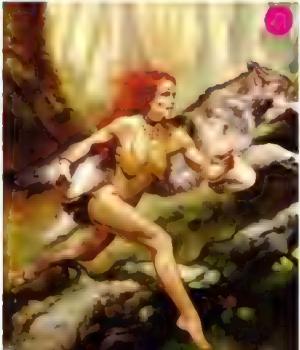
43 HR Giger
Location: Switzerland

Hans Rudolf Giger is best known for his work on Alien, but the Swiss surrealist's work goes beyond his dark creation. Imbued with a sense of erotic fetishism and biomechanical aesthetics, Giger's art has influenced digital and traditional artists for decades.
www.hrgiger.com

41 Boris Vallejo & Julie Bell
Location: US

Together Boris and Julie produce classic fantasy art. While painting individually they achieved commercial and artistic success, but as a married couple their partnership has seen their art rise to legendary status.
www.imaginistix.com

42 Marta Dahlig
Location: Poland

Marta immediately caught our eye with her Seven Deadly Sins series on deviantART, and has since established herself as a leading digital fantasy artist. You can discover some of her techniques in issue 100 where she paints a nymph in an unusual colour scheme.
www.dahlig.deviantart.com

40 Bobby Chiu
Location: Canada

"Being among these amazing artists is humbling and terrifying all at the same time. Thank you ImagineFX," says Bobby. We don't think he ought to feel terrified at all. This digital artist's creature and character work has depth and all sorts of quirky personality to it.
www.bit.ly/ifx_bchiu

39 Bob Eggleton
Location: US

With eight Best Professional Artist Hugo Awards to his name, Bob's painterly artwork has graced countless covers and Magic The Gathering cards. He's also created eight of his own art books, which focus on topics such as dragons, aliens and sea monsters.
www.bit.ly/ixf-beggleton

38 Dave McKean
Location: England

Dave incorporates drawing, painting, photography, collage, found objects, digital art and sculpture into his work. Known for his comic art, Dave is also the winner of the World Fantasy Award for Best Artist and has written a number of novels and graphic novels.
www.davemckean.com

Why I like...
Iain McCaig

"Iain's work was a huge inspiration for me during my time at university. His honesty about the whole creative process was really refreshing."
Kelly Balder Reader

37 Iain McCaig
Location: Canada
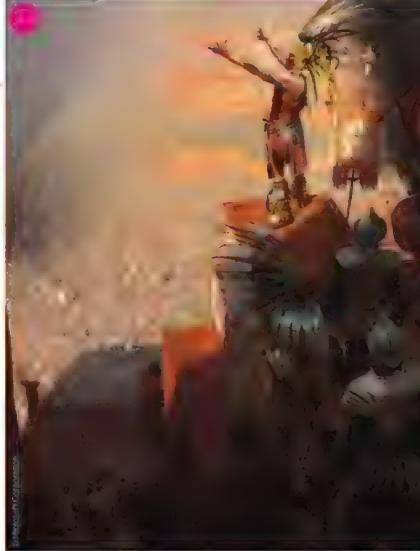
Having earned his stripes as an illustrator in England, notably for work on the cherished Fighting Fantasy books, Iain entered the film world. As well as working on Terminator 2, Hook and Harry Potter, he designed Queen Amidala and Darth Maul for the Star Wars prequels.
www.iainmccaig.blogspot.co.uk

36 Adi Granov
Location: England

Marvel artist Adi shot to fame for his art on the book Iron Man: Extremis series. His unique style offers a hard and clean antidote to the looseness of most comic art. Now contracted exclusively to Marvel, Adi is one of the industry's most in-demand cover artists.
www.adigranov.net

35 Mike Mignola
Location: US

Famous for creating Hellboy, Mike became the poster child for creator-owned comics in the 1990s. His style is clean and sharp. Mike has since written numerous books, Hellboy graphic novels and worked closely with Guillermo del Toro on Blade II and Hellboy.
www.artofmikemignola.com

34 Craig Mullins
Location: US

Regarded as one of the pioneers of digital painting, Craig mixes traditional expression and mark making inspired by John Singer Sargent with digital tools. Craig's work includes art for BioShock 2, Halo and Fallout 3 as well as numerous projects for Disney.
www.goodbrush.com

33 Moebius
Location: France

French illustrator Moebius (Jean Giraud) dragged fantasy art into mainstream attention with his comics Blueberry, Arzach. The Incal. His work influenced the development of graphic novels, modern comics and films, including Alien, Star Wars and The Fifth Element.
www.moebius.fr

32 Alex Ross
Location: US

Alex's sumptuous art presents a realism rarely found in comics. His first comic, Marvels, aimed to present superheroes from the view of an ordinary man, while his follow up, the DC Kingdom Come, saw his sense of realism to greater depths.
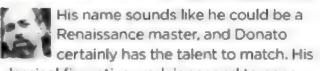www.alexrossart.com

31 Joe Madureira
Location: US

Joe Mad is a comic artist who helped bring a manga influence to western comics. Along with work for Marvel on Uncanny X-Men, Deadpool and most recently, Avenging Spider-Man, Joe also set up the now closed videogame studio famous for Darksiders.
www.joemadfan.com

30 Donato Giancola
Location: US

His name sounds like he could be a Renaissance master, and Donato certainly has the talent to match. His classical figurative work is second to none and from mermaids to dragons, and serpents to horsemen, Donato has dominated fantasy illustration over the past two decades.
www.donatoart.com

Why I like...
Moebius

"Moebius created worlds: real, gritty, spiritual and imaginative worlds. His use of minimal lines to define perspective is astonishing. A true pioneer."
Ian Dean Associate Editor

29 Dan LuVisi
Location: US

Dan is a film concept and costume design artist who's best known for his graphic novel Last Man Standing – a showcase in how to build a believable fantasy world. The book has been picked up by Dark Horse and Paramount is developing a film based on it.
www.danluvisiart.com

28 Kerem Beyit
Location: US

Kerem has been creating book covers, character designs and fantasy illustrations for companies as varied as LucasArts, Blizzard and Disney since 2003. Although digital, Kerem's style is reminiscent of the wood-engravings of Gustave Doré.
www.bit.ly/ifx-kbeyit

27 RK Post
Location: US

A history of creating art for TSR, Wizards of the Coast and game companies undercuts this painter's appeal. A true self-taught traditional painter who also creates his own art. His stylised take on fantasy staples ensures he's on most art directors' shortlists.
www.rkpost.net

26 Michael Whelan
Location: US

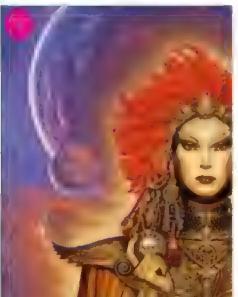Since his first gallery showing in 1975, Michael has continued to win awards and accolades. A renowned book cover illustrator and fine artist who calls his art imaginative realism. Michael has remained at the forefront of the fantasy art movement.
www.michaelwhelan.com

25 Jim Lee
Location: US

Jim is regarded as one of the industry's most dynamic pencillers. He started with Marvel, but it was the move to DC that ensured Jim's place as [...] giving back with Hush, the New 52 and Superman Unchained being [...] of a busy career.
www.bit.ly/ifx-jlee

24
Charles
Vess
Location: US

An artist, a publisher and writer, Charles became a freelancer in 1975 for Heavy Metal, he has since had gallery exhibitions worldwide and illustrated the Stardust graphic novel. His recent work in The Cats of Tanglewood Forest and Blueberry Girl have both become the New York Times best-sellers.
www.bit.ly/ifx-cvess

Why I like...
Raphael Lacoste

"If you've played any major video game in the past 10 years, chances are your character will have walked across the worlds of Raphael. His command of grand-scale environments really impresses. From science fiction to fantasy and realism, the artist's control of light ensures that his landscapes feel alive and vital."
Daniel Vincent Art Editor

23 Wayne Barlowe
Location: US

Wayne has explored the worlds of fantasy and science fiction in his entire career, not only as an artist but as an author too. Untethering himself from conventional thinking about what other worlds would look like, he has created artwork that looks truly otherworldly.
www.bit.ly/ifx-wbarlowe

22 Raphael Lacoste
Location: Canada

Raphael paints deep, sumptuous, sprawling environments you want to explore. After a period in films on projects such as Terminator Salvation, Raphael is now back at Ubisoft as brand art director for the successful Assassin's Creed franchise.
www.raphael-lacoste.com

21 Andreas Rocha
Location: Portugal

Known for his epic landscapes and environments, Andreas produces role, title card game imagery and concept art. He's also built up a range of self-initiated work. "I feel small among all these names. I've admired for a long time, but proud nonetheless," he says.
www.andreasrocha.com

20 Peter Andrew Jones

Location Location

A veteran of the golden years of book cover illustration in the 1970s, Peter created jacket artwork for works by Isaac Asimov, Ray Bradbury, Philip K Dick and many more science fiction authors. In the early 80s, he teamed up with Ian Livingstone and Steve Jackson, and millions of youngsters subsequently discovered his work via the Fighting Fantasy book series. Today he publishes his artwork via his own company, Legendary Art Publishing.
www.peterandrewjones.net

19 Maciej Kuciara
Location US

Maciej is a concept artist for the film, TV and video games industries who has worked for Naughty Dog, Crytek and Warner Bros Pictures. An enviable talent for digital art, Maciej has produced imagery that's both artistically viable and conceptually useful.
www.maciejkuciara.com

18 Kekai Kotaki
Location US

After over eight years with ArenaNet helping to set the look of the Guild Wars universe, Kekai is now a freelance illustrator and concept artist. He's been helping Bungie with its upcoming Destiny, as well as painting epic card art and covers.
www.kekai-art.com

17 Feng Zhu
Location Singapore

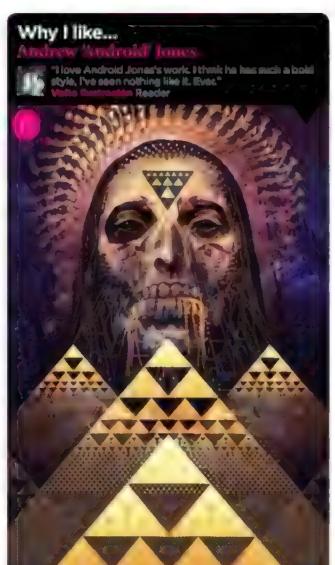Working as a concept artist in film, Feng has collaborated with prestige greats Steven Spielberg, James Cameron and Michael Bay. In 2009 he founded the FZD School of Design, to help students wanting to break into the entertainment industry.
www.fengzhudesign.com

16 Adrian Smith
Location Scotland

A British illustrator working for Games Workshop, Adrian paints detailed fantasy illustrations in the tradition of Alan Lee and Paul Bonner. As well as being praised for the atmosphere of Warhammer and 40K, Adrian is also working on the graphic novel series Broz.
www.adriansmith.co.uk

Why I like...
Feng Zhu

"As an environmental artist starting out, he has the most amazing insight. His knowledge of texture and light is astonishing. He has to be one of my top inspirational artists."
Shaun Mines Reader

15 Andrew Jones
Location: US
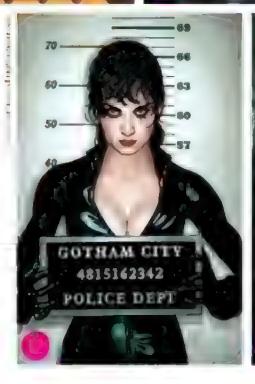
'Android' Jones is a pioneer in digital art. Having started his career at ILM in 2002 he co-founded ConceptArt.org. Android is known for taking on unusual challenges – such as creating 1,000 self-portraits in 1,000 days, and illustrating the cover of ImagineFX issue 50.
www.androidjones.com

14 Ron Lemen
Location: US

An artist and instructor at The Art Department, Ron has established himself as one of the internet's most accessible sources of anatomy instruction. He also paints adverts and book illustrations for major US clients, including Wizards of the Coast and Magic: The Gathering.
www.ronlemen.blogspot.co.uk

13 Todd Lockwood
Location: US

Todd became part of the second generation of artists working at TSR – then the publisher of Advanced Dungeons & Dragons. He learned on fuelling his imagination by playing D&D, painting prolifically, and doing a range of other D&D work.
www.toddlockwood.com

12 Adam Hughes
Location: US

Considered by many to be one of a new generation of 'good girl' artists inspired by Petty, Vargas and elegren, Adam is a master at painting the delicate curves and sultry smiles of beautiful women. He revamped Catwoman and many of DC Comics female cast.
www.justsayah.com

11 Yoshitaka Amano
Location: Japan

One of Japan's foremost fantasy artists, Yoshitaka has worked on everything from the Gatchaman TV series to the Final Fantasy games. He collaborated with Neil Gaiman on Sandman: Dream Hunters, and many other artists and musicians.
www.bit.ly/ifx-yamano

9 James Gurney
Location: US

When James's first Dinotopia book came out in 1992, it lit up the New York Times' bestseller list and won a slew of awards. He's since filled out his palaeographic universe with several further books. More than just a study of extinct lizards, James's work demonstrates a keen eye for painting ancient architecture.
www.bit.ly/ifx-jgurney

8 Frank Frazetta
Location: US

Considered the founder of modern fantasy art, Frank brought finesse to what in the 60s and 70s was considered purely commercial art. Having worked on book covers, movie posters and comics he is best known for his iconic paintings of Conan.
www.frankfrazetta.net

7 Brom
Location: US

A gothic fantasy artist, Brom has produced art for role-playing games book covers and comics. Now painting and working on his own books and projects, his artistic blend of the macabre with overtones of cruelty sets him well apart from the crowd.
www.bromart.com

10 John Howe
Location: Switzerland

Canadian-born John is best know for his delicate Tolkien art. He's worked on Peter Jackson's The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit films, and has painted covers and interiors for the books. John's love of medieval history ensures that his fantasy art has one foot planted in reality.
www.john-howe.com

6 Stanley Lau
Location: Singapore

Stanley is the creative director of Singapore's Imaginary Friends Studios producing art for comics, video games and TV. He mixes a manga sensibility with a western pin-up approach, resulting in 2008's Tepper Project that became an internet sensation.
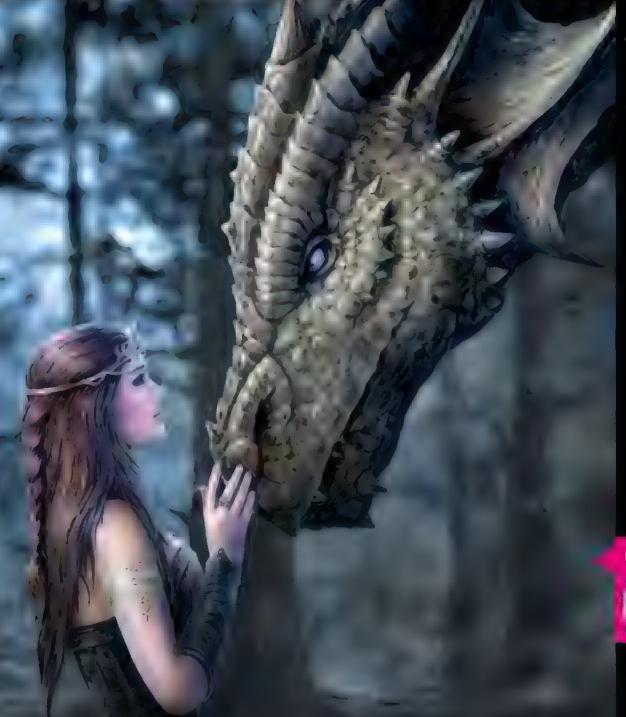www.artgerm.deviantart.com

5

Sparth

Location: US
Web: www.sparth.com

Real name Nicolas Bouvier, this concept artist is at the forefront of digital, abstract art. Sparth grew up in the US, Singapore, China and Europe, and was influenced by these disparate cultures, observing and making notes of the people that passed him by. This, he says, is largely responsible for his many passions, which range from space, to buildings and robotics.

Using these influences and a range of painting techniques, Sparth has turned his visionary eye to leading video games, including Halo 4, Rage and Assassin's Creed.

4

Anne Stokes

Location: England
Web: www.annestokes.com

Anne has been painting fantasy art for over 14 years, working for clients such as D&D as well as her own range of book covers, sculptures and jewellery. "It was an honour to be included in this vote with so many great fantasy artists whose work I admire," says Anne. "To be highly placed on the list is a huge compliment."

The Hobbit was a great influence on Anne growing up, and Tolkien's rich language struck a chord with the artist. "I put a lot of thought into what to paint and often try to convey an emotion or meaning," she says, adding: "I think it's this symbolism within my art that people identify with."

3

Brian Froud

Location: England
Web: www.worldoffroud.com

Brian has been painting witty faerie and goblin art since the 1970s. His most famous book, in collaboration with Alan Lee, was the 1979 release Faeries, which recast the woodland creatures as mischievous, malevolent deities. He imbues every image with expression, humour and believability. These traits led Jim Henson to hire Brian to design the creature of Labyrinth, and with wife Wendy, the world of The Dark Crystal.

Brian lives in Devon, south-west England. The environments in his art are often inspired by Dartmoor, and this rugged landscape seeps into every painting.

Why I like...
Brian Froud

"As a child I was captivated by Brian's goblins and faeries. His creatures are dark but humorous, grim but enchanting. Above all, they're truly original."
Ian Dean Associate Editor

Why I like...
Keith Thompson

"Few artists mix styles and media quite like Keith. In each quirky, intricate character or creature you'll find references to classic manga, Arthur Rackham and European folklore. It's no surprise, then, that Keith has become a key member of Guillermo del Toro's art team, his influence always evident."
Claire Howlett Editor

2

Keith Thompson

Location: Canada Web: www.keiththompsonart.com

"It's amazing to find out so many people have enjoyed the work," says Keith as we reveal his high place in our reader vote. "It's also lit a fire under me. I need to make many more things because of it."

Keith is a leading illustrator who has recently collaborated with Guillermo del Toro on a number of films, including this summer's Pacific Rim. His surreal, anime-influenced creature designs and characters can't fail to engage. "I hope my work has appealed to people because it imparts some of the experience I get viewing art. I love looking at artwork and feeling sucked in – absorbed and lost."

1

Genzoman

Location: Chile Web: www.genzoman.deviantart.com

A manga-style artist working for UDON Entertainment, Genzoman – whose real name is Gonzalo Ordoñez Arias – has created art for many video games and comics, including World of Warcraft, Legend of the Five Rings and Clash of the Titans. Genzoman's art has become an online phenomenon, through his mixing of influences as disparate as Giger, Frazetta and Hideo Hagiwara.

"I guess in some way you drink from your sources," says Genzoman as he tries to identify why people are attracted to his art. "Art is a social conversation, an instance between artist and spectator, an invisible place where we can meet to talk, not using words but images. Being able to establish that conversation and have a theme in common with the audience means a lot to me and I feel lucky for that."

He also feels lucky to have been voted ImagineFX readers' favourite

artist. Showing genuine pleasure at the news, Genzoman says: "For me it's unexpected, mainly because the list has many artists whom I admire and have influenced my own evolution as an artist.

"I feel like a little garage band that suddenly appears in a list alongside The Beatles, The Who, Pink Floyd and Led Zeppelin. It's a very pleasant surprise and I'm very grateful to all those who voted for me and who have allowed my art to come into their lives. Thank you!"

Why I like... Genzoman

"Genzoman has such a unique and dynamic style that grants his characters so much life and emotions. He always amazes me."
Jasmin Causevic Reader

"I love Genzoman's anime/manga feel in all of his work, the harmony of colours and the fluidity of every character that he creates."
Jasper Celone Lagorza Reader

"Genzoman's art is irresistible. Any one of his paintings will inspire many artists to strive to reach his level of workmanship!"
Alejandro Zacarias Reader

"Genzoman's use of colour and expression drives his character art, and uniquely he can adapt his style and turn his hand to almost any subject."
Ian Dean Associate Editor

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART
ImagineFX